

MODERN DRUMMER™

FEBRUARY/MARCH 1981
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A Contemporary Publication Exclusively for Drummers

71002

The New
PETER CRISS
RICK MAROTTA
Studio Hit Maker

JOHN BONHAM
In Retrospect

**Mel Lewis/
Art Blakey
Transcriptions**

The Dixie Dregs'
RQD MORGENSTEIN

**1981 Reader's
Poll Ballot**

**MD Goes
9 ISSUES YEARLY**



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FEATURES:



PETER CRISS

At the pinnacle of Kiss' success, drummer Peter Criss recently decided to leave the band and embark on a new career with his own band. Off came the cat makeup—his trademark—and people got their first glimpse of the real Peter Criss. Criss is determined to prove that he can make it solo, and in this interview, talks at length about his reasons for leaving the security of Kiss for a new beginning—alone. 12

ROD MORGENSTEIN

In recent years the popularity of the Dixie Dregs has surged. Rod Morgenstein, drummer for the Dregs, is a well schooled and very musical drummer who feels that, "You have to be thinking of ways to get as many sounds as possible out of the instrument you play . . . Always hit a different drum. Think of the drums as one of five instruments, as in this band, and what you can do to round out and complete what the others are playing." 24

RICK MAROTTA

Studio drummer Rick Marotta has played for some of the top recording artists in the music industry. His much sought-after drumming style has enhanced the music of Linda Ronstadt, Jackson Browne, Paul Simon, Peter Frampton and countless others. Marotta stresses the importance of keeping good, solid time which explains for the success that he has encountered. Marotta also talks about his new venture—as drummer for the group Ronin. 30



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EDITOR'S OVERVIEW



This issue of Modern Drummer is the first of our new nine time publishing cycle. You'll see MD in April, May, June and July; one issue for August/September and again monthly through October, November and December to round out the year.

A word to subscribers: Your subscription expiration dates are being automatically adjusted by our computer. You'll still receive the correct amount of issues due you, but you can expect to see your renewal coming up sooner to adjust to the new frequency. We're expecting a smooth transition, but feel free to contact us should a problem arise with your subscription. One of the Circulation Department people will be glad to help.

What's up for '81? Well, the basic MD format will remain the same, though you'll probably note an even wider assortment of feature articles. For openers, Hal Blaine, Roger Hawkins, Simon Phillips, Steve Smith, Harvey Mason, Alan Gratzner, James Bradley, Jr., Billy Kreutzmann and Mickey Hart, Shelly Manne, Ed Blackwell and Terry Bozzio are just a few of the artists on the exclusive interview roster. We'll also investigate the educational programs at Drummer's Collective in New York, and the Percussion Institute of Technology in LA; take a tour of one of the nation's major drum manufacturing plants; explore the world of four Broadway show drummers in a roundtable discussion, and present comprehensive reports on how to properly mike your drums, how to open a drum shop, how to get your product idea on the market, and how to publish your drum book. We'll be looking at new drums, old drums, ethnic drums, and everything in between. And MD's diversified assortment of specialized columns will continue to help you be the best you want to be. Along with our standard roster, you can also look forward to guest columnists like Dave Samuels, Charley Donnelly, Vic Firth, Hal Blaine and Alan Dawson, plus a few more surprises.

We've started off the new year with ex-Kiss drummer, Peter Criss. On his own after seven years in cat makeup, the all new Criss reflects on his background and early drumming inspirations amidst an optimistic look to the future. Drummer Rod Morgenstein discusses jazz influences in his musical career, and the role he's played in the overall success of the Dixie Dregs. And San Francisco based George Marsh, an accomplished player and teacher, takes an intelligent look at drums and drumming, enlightening us along the way with his own unique "inner approach." A part of the new breed of jazz rock oriented studio drummers, Rick Marotta—whose been laying down hit making rhythm tracks for everybody from Carly Simon to Peter Frampton—reflects on life in the recording studios of New York. And MD's special, *John Bonham: In Retrospect* is a fine collection of more than forty Bonham rhythmic transcriptions by author James Morton in tribute to one of rock's most memorable players.

In the column department, Frank Kofsky concludes his three part *Care and Feeding of Drums* series, and Bob Saydlowski, Jr., looks close up at the Sonor XK925. There's Ed Soph on bass drum development, Dave Garibaldi on toms, Roy Burns on drum teachers, Rick Van Horn on the singing drummer, and a challenging Art Blakey solo transcription by Doug Garrison.

You'll also find the Third Annual MD Reader's Poll ballot in this issue. Needless to say, your favorite players would like to have your votes. The deadline is March 10th, so don't delay. Look for the exciting results in the June issue.

RS

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MODERN DRUMMER Magazine ASSN 0194-4533) is published 9 times yearly, February, April, May, June, July, August, October, November and December by Modern Drummer Publications, Inc., 1000 Clifton Avenue, Clifton, N.J. 07013. Controlled Circulation Postage paid at Clifton, N.J. 07015 and at Richmond, Virginia 23219. Copyrighted 1981 by Modern Drummer Publications, Inc. All rights reserved. Reproduction without the permission of the publisher is prohibited. **SUBSCRIPTIONS:** \$15.95 per year, \$28.95, two years. Single copies \$2.00. **MANUSCRIPTS:** Modern Drummer welcomes manuscripts, however, cannot assume responsibility for them. Manuscripts must be accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope. **CHANGE OF ADDRESS:** Allow at least six weeks for a change. Please provide both old and new address. **MUSIC DEALERS:** Modern Drummer is available for resale at bulk rates. Direct correspondence to Modern Drummer Publications, Inc., 1000 Clifton Avenue, Clifton, N.J. 07013. (201) 778-1700 **POSTMASTER:** Send form 3579 to Modern Drummer, 1000 Clifton Avenue, Clifton, NJ. 07013.



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ASK A PRO

BILL BRUFORD



Q: Are your snare drum tuning techniques different in the recording studio than they are in a live performance situation?

Larry Kanusher
Spring Valley, NY

A: Yes, I think so. In a live performance you can get away with more overtones and more harmonics than you can on disc. Live, you are going to lose a lot of your overtones and harmonics to the environment. The sound is going on around you, so you can get away with more. On a recording you have to tone it down somewhat. And you have to be very careful what frequency the overtone and harmonics are or else it can be an actual note that is too bothering, so you have to adjust it. You have to start tuning and see if you can find something that sounds nice. But in both, the drum sounds better accompanied than unaccompanied. You see, when it's in with the rest of the music, the sound of the drum is suitable. On its own it is less attractive. When it's played with an entire rock group playing, it's more suitable. One way or another it seems to have a pretty identifiable kind of sound.

JACK DEJOHNETTE

Q: Why do you tune your drums so high? Are they tuned to a specific note?
Keith Demech
Atlanta, GA

A: Actually, my drums aren't really tuned that high. They sound high in relation to commercially tuned studio drums, which have more of a flat, muffled sound. However, for jazz playing they're not tuned high at all. I don't use any dampening or muffling in my drums. It's a natural sound of the drums you hear. I don't tune to intervals. I just tune them to a pitch, higher or lower depending on the playing situation. I don't tune to a specific note.



PETER HOORELBEKE RARE EARTH

Q: How do you structure your drum solos?

Ron Rapasaldi
San Antonio, TX

A: I try to keep them on a simple level, and see what areas open up from it, making sure the solo doesn't climax too early. My solos are played along with a percussionist and we kind of interchange ideas. I give him a solid foundation from which to play off of, and he does the same for me. He may stay with just a light beat on the congas. If I stop playing for two or three beats, you still hear that constant rhythm. So that frees me. Sometimes I'll play timbales while he plays congas, and the thrust of the tune is kept by the guitar and bass, and maybe a tambourine. It's a light kind of a feel, with the emphasis on beat one if we are playing in 4/4.



DON LAMOND

Q: How did you get to play with the Woody Herman band? Was it through an audition?

John Agnello
New York, NY

A: No. Sonny Berman and Chubby Jackson recommended me to the band. I had played with them in New York. It was actually through a recommendation. It's usually through word of mouth when you play with a band like that. I worked with the Woody Herman band from the beginning of 1945, through 1949. There was a break during 1946 when the band disbanded, and then it started again in 1947. During that time, I went to California where I worked with Red Norvo and did some studio work.

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IT'S QUESTIONABLE

Have a problem? A question? Ask MD. Address all questions to: Modern Drummer, c/o It's Questionable, 1000 Clifton Ave., Clifton, NJ 07013. Questions cannot be answered personally.

by Cheech Iero

Q. What ever happened to the Jimi Hendrix Experience drummer, Mitch Mitchell?

T.E.
Westminster, CA

A. According to Rolling Stone Magazine, Mitchell is currently working with an English group called Hinkley's Heroes and is also writing a book about his years with the Experience.

Q. I have looked high and low for an electronic percussive device used by Yes, Jethro Tull, and Uriah Heep which simulates hand claps. What's the story?

B.G.Y.
London, EN

A. Recording engineers refer to this item as the "crowd in a box" though its real name is the Clap Trap, manufactured by Musicaid. It's an electronic rhythm machine which recreates the sound of an ensemble of clappers or an entire crowd, plus a range of drum crash effects, explosions, foot stomping and gun fire. The Clap Trap has a means of controlling the pitch and togetherness of the handclaps, "ragged or tight". It is triggered by tapping a foot switch, front panel switch or from an automatic built in metronome. Write to Musicaid: 176 Hatfield Road. St. Albans, Herts, England.

Q. Could you explain the long and short note method of phrasing drum charts?

K.L.
Butte, MT

A. The method you're referring to involves considering all whole, half, quarter, dotted, and tied notes as long notes. Eighth notes, sixteenth notes and notes of lesser time value are considered short notes. The short notes are generally played on the snare drum to simulate a staccato sound. To achieve a sustained effect the long notes are played on the cymbal, reinforced with either bass drum, snare drum or tom-tom. This method can improve the drummer's ability to accurately phrase each note of the figure without breaking the rhythmic flow of the tune.

Q. The Rogers Drum Company has a line of drum heads called Power Dot Heads. Could you tell me something about them?

R.S.
Palm Springs, FL

A. Essentially, the Roger's Power Dot Heads are similar to the C. S. line made by Remo. Both offer the same tonal qualities and stick response. The ratio of the size and thickness of the dot, to the size and thickness of the head is also about the same. The difference is strictly cosmetic.

Q. Could you tell me the pay scale for a percussionist in Las Vegas?

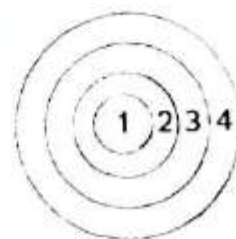
B.C.
New York, NY

A. The basic scale for a union percussionist in Las Vegas is \$510.28 a week, for six nights, not including rehearsals. Musicians are also paid extra for doubling; 10% extra for the first double, and 5% extra for every double after that. Since each "instrument family" is considered another double, the percussionist is probably the highest paid individual in the orchestra.

Q. What are the differences in playing on varied areas of the snare drum head?

P.B.
Belmont, MA

A. Area 1 offers maximum snare response and a short sound. A full snare response with a slight ring can be obtained from Area 2. Area 3 produces maximum ring with a slower snare response, very effective for playing soft rolls. Area 4 is perfect for light playing and a thin tone with minimal snare sound.



Q. How can I contact my favorite drummer Bun E. Carlos from Cheap Trick?

M.G.
Verdi, KS

A. Bun E. Carlos can be contacted by writing to Cheap Trick's management: Ken Adamany, 520 University Ave., Madison, WI 53703.

CORRECTION

In the December 1980/January 1981 issue of MD. in the article "Drum Industry Executives Respond to the Last Five Years ..." the following comments were attributed to William F. Ludwig instead of David Gordon:

"The shape and direction of drumming in future years is, as always, in the hands of the players and the listening audience. We can, however, venture a few reasonable predictions relating to percussion products. In the next few years look for:

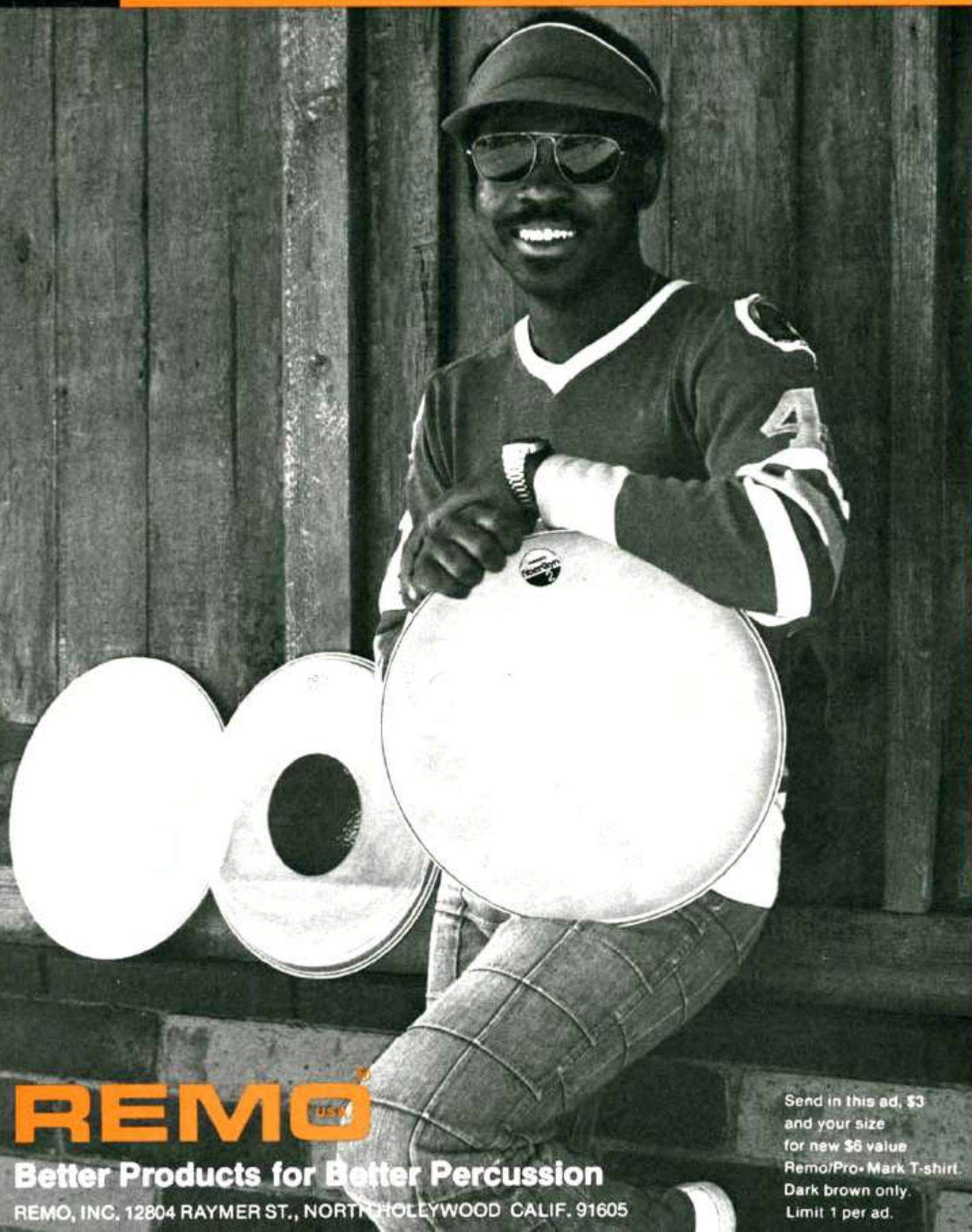
Drum head manufacturers to continue to develop a variety of options in tonality and resonance.

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Our apologies to both Mr. Gordon and Mr. Ludwig.

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READER'S PLATFORM

I'm working on a book about jazz drummers for Schirmer Books, tentatively titled, *The Drummers*. Essentially historical in character, it will single out

dominant figures and those they influenced, and via in-depth research and interviewing, define them as completely as possible—each and every one within his

own time frame. I am seeking any and all significant information regarding jazz drummers so that I may bring to the book a sense of richness and reality. I particularly need information about early drummers. How they played. What their equipment was like, anecdotal material, stories about the players ranging from pioneers like the late Tommy Miles—a favorite of the late Gene Krupa—to the acknowledged greats like Baby Dodds and Zutty Singleton. I would hope to hear from readers, critics and musicians who really knew certain drummers well and can provide telling insight into the nature of their playing. Space will be allotted to Latin, R&B and rock. I would like to be contacted by those knowledgeable in these areas. Foreign drummers will also be covered and readers and writers close to the scene abroad could be very helpful. Please forward all correspondence to:

BURT KORALL
2 PARK LANE
MT. VERNON, NY 10552

Your article on Louie Bellson was fabulous. Modern drumming truly needs Louie Bellson. It's good to know that one of the great drummers of yesterday keeps abreast to remain one of the great drummers of today and tomorrow.

MIKE SMITH
DAYTON, OH

John Bonham of Led Zeppelin died on September 25, 1980. To millions of people, drummers or otherwise, Bonzo was a model of today's rock drummer. As with many other drummers, John was one of my greatest influences. Will you please write an article on him to let everyone know that he is not forgotten? The man is dead, but "The Song Remains the Same."

BILL KELLER
RANCHO PALES VERDES, CA

I'm sure that you get many special requests for articles, but I feel I must add mine to the rest.

continued on page 11



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Readers Platform: *continued from page 8*

My request is a tribute to the late John Bonham. This man was proof of the saying underrated. You've had interviews with many famous and not so famous drummers and I feel it would have been a matter of time before you got together with John Bonham. Now that he's gone, there is an even bigger reason that you help to educate the rest of the world about Bonham.

A lot can be learned by just listening to him play. Listen to his use of the bass drum, cymbals and his way of making the basic drum kit sound like a group of drummers playing at once. He was the ultimate power rock drummer. And still it seemed that no one knew much about him because he was content to just play drums and lay down a solid foundation for his band.

JIM CHEATLE
HOMETOWN, IL

Editor's Note: We agree that John Bonham will certainly be missed on the contemporary music scene, and felt it appropriate to present a tribute to him. Please turn to page 20 for Modern Drummer's musical tribute to John Bonham.

I would like to add two products to those mentioned in Rick Van Horn's column, "Cleaning Your Set" in the Oct./Nov. issue of *Modern Drummer*.

Auto Touch-Up Paint comes in a small bottle with a brush and is perfect for covering chips on the bass drum hoop. *Fantastik* or 409 cleans the heads to a nearly brand new quality. Anyone who uses brushes will find this beneficial and the appearance will be improved for the "clean look" freak.

JERRY BOGNER
IRVINGTON, NJ

Great article on Louie Bellson in your Oct./Nov. issue. I am a private drum instructor in the Moline, Illinois area and always tell my young students about Louie and that he is a native of our area.

I finally met Louie at a local college drum clinic and concert. We all know what a phenomenal artist the man is, but I'd like to add that the charisma of the person is equally phenomenal. He's everything in person that you've ever heard about him. It seems to me that being the giant that he is, he never forgot the virtue of humility.

GREG THOMAS RECKSIECK
ROCK ISLAND, IL

In regard to the article on Mick Fleetwood, the interview was great, but Fleetwood copped out about practice. He's never practiced much and doesn't know paradiddles and is glad. True, you can't forget the basics. Fleetwood is a very basic drummer and does it well, but like anything else, there is always room for improvement and it all comes down to practice.

BOB CROPSEY
WALLINGTON, NJ

In reference to Rick Van Horn's column, "Cleaning Your Set", I would like to suggest a cleaning compound that requires little elbow grease, but gives you a brilliant shine after effectively cleaning a tarnished cymbal. It is called *Pumice* (rubbing compound) and may be purchased at a hardware store. One other point; instead of using water, use alcohol with the compound.

RICHARD R. SANTORSOLA
MELROSE, MA

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The New **PETER CR**



ISS

by Rick Mattingly

Photos by Chip Schofield



It takes a lot of courage for a musician to leave an established group to pursue a solo career. It takes even more courage when the group is Kiss, who truly reached the top, both in popular success, and in financial security. Not only will the departing member lose the security of the group, but in this case, he will have to emerge from behind the Kabuki-like makeup of Kiss and for the first time, face the world as an individual. Despite all of the risks, drummer Peter Criss recently left the group, shed his cat makeup, and released a solo album.

Born in a tough neighborhood in Brooklyn, drums kept Peter off the streets and gave him a direction. Criss began playing professionally while still in his teens, and after working in a variety of situations, he joined Kiss after running an ad in Rolling Stone. During the next several years, Kiss truly did write their own chapter in rock history. As often happens with popular groups, critics complained that the group had too limited a format, despite sold-out concerts in the biggest halls and a catalog of top-selling records. In this case though, it turns out that the drummer agreed. Peter Criss left the group because the music he was writing did not fit in with the Kiss image. His new album contains a variety of influences, and for all the things it is, what it is not, is Kiss.

This interview was conducted in the Kiss offices in New York. Peter is still vice-president of the Kiss organization and will continue to share in all of the business dealings. We began by discussing his first experiences with music.

PC: I started when I was 9 years old, playing on pots and pans with two forks. I really did. My mother always had music playing and I remember taking out her pots and pans and beating on them. Of course, it could be very aggravating, listening to someone smacking on pots with a couple of forks, so finally, my father brought home a set of brushes, and I played on the pots with those. That was a little easier for my mother to handle.

RM: When did you finally get a drum?

PC: My first drum was an old army marching snare drum that my father picked up at an antique store. I was playing in a doo-wop band called The Stars. My father built me a wooden box to hold my drum, and he put "Stars" on it in glitter letters. I wish I had a picture of that. I was only about 13. They would be singing all these songs and I'd be behind my drum keeping time with brushes. When I was about 15, I got a job making deliveries for a butcher. He had an old set of Slingerland Radio King drums and he said he would sell them to me for two hundred dollars. They were so old that the mother of pearl finish was

yellow, but it was a set of drums, and I worked a long time to get them. I finally got enough money to buy them, but they didn't have a floor tom, so I had to work another year to get a floor tom. That was my first kit. I used those drums for quite sometime, and I've still got them.

RM: Did you play in the school band?

PC: They threw me out. I swear. We were playing a march, but I didn't like the drum part and thought it could be improved. So I made up my own part, and the next thing I knew, I was thrown out, drum and all.

RM: So how did you learn to play?

PC: When I got my first drums, I would put the radio on full blast, and try to play along. But I was too loud. Finally, my mother bought me a stereo. I remember buying Ventures albums and learning to play songs like "Walk, Don't Run." I finally joined a band which had an accordion, sax and guitar, and we would do all the Ventures stuff. My biggest moment of the evening would be "Wipe Out." That was my big solo.

RM: Do you remember your first gig?

PC: A bar mitzvah. I remember it very clearly. I got paid 25 bucks and I had to wear a yarmulke. I really remember playing Hava Nagila. I was 16 at the time.

RM: How about your first professional gig?

PC: It was in a club called something like the "Dew Drop Inn." They had bands every Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. I made about 75 dollars a week, which at that time, was a lot of money, and got free sandwiches and pizza.

RM: Did you have to join 802?

PC: Yeah. One day this guy came in and said, "Are you guys in the union?" And we said, "No." So he said, "Well, you've got to pack up and get out. This is a union club." Then the owner said, "You can't take these guys out. It's not my fault. I thought they were members." So, we all joined the union. I'm still a member of 802.

RM: I understand that you studied with Gene Krupa. How did that come about?

PC: There was a jazz place called the Metropole, and they started having rock groups open the show. One night when I was about 18, I was passing by this club with some friends, and we decided to go in for a drink. The group that was playing there was Joey Greco and the In Crowd. Their drummer wasn't there and Joey knew me, so he came over and asked me if I would sit in. I said, "I've never played in front of this many people before." But I went ahead and sat in, and I was so scared, that I played great. Afterwards, they said, "Look, would you like the job here?" And I said, "Sure!" I only got paid \$100 a week for 6 shows a night, 6 nights a week, but I didn't care,

because we were opening for Krupa. You see, when I was a kid, my father used to always say, "You'll never be as good as Gene Krupa." I had to be as good as Krupa, because he was my father's idol. So when I got the job at the Metropole, I figured, "Now's my chance!" I would stay late every night to catch Krupa's show, and I would just sit and look up at him and think, "He's so great!" Then I started going up to him a lot and saying, "Mr. Krupa, could you show me this and show me that and would you show me this . . ." At first he acted like he wished I'd leave him alone, but I just kept after him and finally he said, "Okay." He got to where he really liked me, and he would even come in early and show me how to do a lot of things I was interested in. I still use the things he showed me whenever I play. In fact, my solos in Kiss were often based on Krupa's "Drum Boogie." He was really a great guy, and getting to know him was like a dream come true for me.

RM: One of the bands you played in before Kiss was called Chelsea. Tell me about that group.

PC: Chelsea was a band I joined when I was around 23. The group consisted of five guys: 4 guitars and drums. I really thought I was going to make it then, because we did an album for Decca records. I probably did some of my most creative drumming on that album. I played everything: congas, bongos, cowbells, maracas, and even a pop-gun on one tune. I thought we had really hit the big time, but the record flopped. I was so disappointed that I just fell apart. But three of us decided to stay together, and we had a trio called Lips. Stan Penridge was one of the guys, and he and I still write together. The other member was Michael Benvenga, who has since passed away. It really bummed me out. I dedicated my first solo album to him, because I promised him that if I ever made my own record, he would be on it. But he died before we recorded it. Getting back to Lips, though, Stan, Mike, and I went from record company to record company, trying to get a contract. One of the people we went to see was Neil Bogart. Neil is president of Casablanca Records now, but then he was president of Buddha Records. So Mike and Stan took acoustic guitars and I took a conga, and we walked right into his office and started auditioning. He threw us out. A couple of years ago, I was having dinner with him one night and I said, "Really think back. Do you remember a crazy group that you once had to throw out of your office?" And he said, "You're kidding!" And I said, "Not only was I the drummer, but one of the songs we sang was 'Beth.'" Today you've got a gold album hanging on your wall for a song you once threw out of your office." He



A young Peter Criss with his idol, Gene Krupa.

couldn't believe it. It was really funny.

RM: How were you making a living during this period?

PC: Back when Chelsea was doing demos, I met a great guy named Shelly Ackerson. After Chelsea broke up, and Lips wasn't doing anything, Shelly would call me up and have me come down to the Record Plant and do studio work. I would have to play Chevrolet jingles and things like that. It was terrible. I didn't like it, but the money was great.

RM: So eventually you ran a famous ad in *Rolling Stone*.

PC: "Drummer willing to do *anything*." I meant it. I was so frustrated that I didn't care what I had to do to make it. So I met Gene and Paul, and 9 months later we got Ace to join, and that was how it all started. One thing led to another and the first thing I knew, I had gold records hanging on my wall.

RM: Did the members of the band come up with the whole Kiss concept, or did management play a part?

PC: When Bill Aucoin became our manager, we were already into makeup, we already had black and silver as our colors, and Ace had already designed our logo. Bill polished us a little and got us a label. We owe a lot to him, and he's still my manager.

RM: How did you develop your cat character?

PC: We were designing our own costumes. The other three had already come up with theirs. Gene loves horror movies, so being a monster was right up his alley; Paul was always the "rock star," so a star fit him perfectly; Ace was always a real "space cadet"; but, I couldn't find me. One night I was home drawing. I went to art school for 3 years. And I was staring at my cat. So I drew my face with his whiskers, nose and green eyes. I showed it to the other guys and they said, "Perfect. It's you all the way."

RM: "Beth" was not a typical Kiss song, yet it was one of the group's biggest hits. Can you tell me about it?

PC: I wrote it with Stan a long time ago. It was written about anybody who is married to guys like us who are never at home. Kiss wanted *Destroyer* to be a really different album than anything we'd done before, and we wanted to be very musical. So we brought in Bob Ezrin, who is a really spectacular producer. He did the *Walls* album by Pink Floyd, and Alice Cooper's *Billion Dollar Babies*. I had first sung "Beth" to Gene in the back of a limousine and he said, "That's really kind of catchy." So the guys were going to do it, but they wanted to make it heavier. But Bob told them, "You're not even playing on it, we're using an orchestra." I said, "Yeah," and we went in and did it.

RM: How did the other guys feel about it?

PC: Well, they didn't like the idea, but the truth was, they just could not play that type of music. To them, "Beth" was not Kiss, but Bob and I insisted that it be put on the album. When the single was released, "Beth" was supposed to be the B side, but everybody started playing it, and suddenly it became the A side. "Beth" seemed to hit everybody. Even the housewives were buying it, and it made the easy listening charts. "Beth" earned me a People's Choice Award and a Writer of the Year Award. The single went double gold and the album went platinum. So the song did really well.

RM: But afterwards, Kiss still did not do very much of your material.

PC: Kiss is a heavy metal band, and my material was different. They would always say, "It's not in the Kiss image, Peter," and I would say, "Well, let's expand our image." They would answer, "We just can't. We're not that type of band."

RM: The solo album you did while you were in Kiss gave you a chance to do your own material.

PC: I still love that album. It went gold and platinum and two of the songs were nominated for Grammy awards. Actually, that album might have been even better, but I had just come out of a major car accident, so we only had 2 weeks to rehearse. I had a concussion, a broken nose, and a broken hand. We had to use another drummer on 3 tracks because of my hand.

RM: What made you finally decide to leave Kiss?

PC: Part of the reason was that I was losing Peter Criss behind the makeup, and that was getting dangerous for me. Being in Kiss was becoming like a job, which wasn't fair to me or to them. I had been thinking about it for 3 years. I knew it was coming; I just didn't know when. Then one night my wife Debra said, "I

really love your music. Why don't they let you do more of it?" And I said, "That's it. I'm going to leave." We were in this very room when I told the others I was quitting. I said, "Guys, I'm really frustrated. Ever since "Beth," which was our biggest hit, you've done very little of my material. You do one of my songs per album, or less, and when we perform, I only get 1 or 2 songs, and that's not enough. There are tons of fan letters pouring in, saying, 'Why doesn't Peter sing more' and 'Why don't you do more songs like "Beth?" ' It's not fair." They felt bad, but they understood. We all shook hands and they said, "We wish you the best of luck." We are still business partners and we are still the best of friends.

RM: So the new solo album was your first project after leaving Kiss?

PC: Right. I produced it, I designed the cover, I wrote 9 of the 10 songs, I

more instruments than 3 guitars. I was able to do love songs and ballads, and I had the horn section from the Blues Brothers, and a string section from the New York Philharmonic. It's got everything I've ever wanted.

RM: I liked the Spanish influence on "Words."

PC: Isn't that great with the castanets? I got the idea from "Spanish Harlem" and from an old Ronettes song that Phil Spector did. I've always wanted to use a string section and castanets, and I finally got to do it. It's one of my favorite songs on the album. I think it shows that I can play more than just heavy rock.

RM: I take it then, that you are happy with the way the album turned out.

PC: A lot of frustration came out in this album. I was also in a lot of pain. I tried to play soccer, but I wasn't very good at it, so as a result, I was literally on crutches when I recorded several of the

out with a whole studio band. There will be 7 of us on stage: drums, 2 guitars, bass, sax, piano and synthesizer.

RM: Will you use any theatrics?

PC: No. It's going to be a real straightforward rock and roll show. Just lights and good music. I had enough bombs, fire, and smoke, when I was in Kiss.

RM: Do you think you will be playing in smaller halls?

PC: I'll probably have to. After headlining for a lot of years, it will be different for me to be opening someone else's show. But that's okay. It will be the old, "Let's blow the headliner off the stage" routine, and that's exciting. I think bands are getting back to playing smaller halls and clubs again. The big stadium syndrome is over. They're calling us musicians again and people are listening to lyrics again. They sing along with the songs, the way I used to sing along with Beatles' songs. I could sing

"I DON'T BELIEVE THAT A DRUMMER SHOULD CONSTANTLY PLAY THROUGH EVERYTHING. A DRUM IS NOT A LEAD INSTRUMENT. YOU'VE GOT YOUR MOMENTS, LIKE WHEN YOU DO A SOLO, OR WHEN YOU HAVE A SPECIFIC PART TO PLAY. BUT THE DRUMMER'S REAL JOB IS TO KEEP THE BEAT. THAT'S WHAT PEOPLE MOVE THEIR FEET TO. ALSO, WHEN A SINGER IS DOING HIS LYRICS, IT'S JUST RUDE TO BE BANGING AWAY BEHIND HIM. YOU SHOULD BE ACCOMPANYING HIM."

drummed on all of them, sang on all of them, helped arrange most of them, and it's been great. I'm finally doing what I've always wanted to do.

RM: I find it curious that you did all of that, yet you called the album *Out of Control*. It looks to me as though you were in total control.

PC: It's like in the *Benny Goodman Story*. I must have seen that movie 50 times because Krupa was in it. Anyway, people used to always tell Benny, "Don't be that way," and so he called one of his songs, "Don't Be That Way." In my early days I used to pull some heavy pranks, and I could be a real terror. People would tell me, "Wow, Peter, you're really out of control." So when I did the album, I decided to call it, *Out of Control*.

RM: I also find it interesting that a drummer has released two solo albums without any drum solos.

PC: I have not written anything that called for a drum solo. I might do one on my next album, but it will have to fit. I did solos on two live Kiss albums. The one on *Kiss Alive I* is my favorite. It was a really good, right-to-the-point solo.

RM: What were some of the specific things you were able to do on this album that you couldn't do with Kiss?

PC: I wanted to do more than just heavy metal music, and I wanted to use

vocals. But this album really means a lot to me, because it is the first thing I've done totally on my own. I spent 10 months on it, because having been in a supergroup, people expect a lot from me. I can't just put out a hundred per cent, I have to put out a hundred and ten. I've always been recognized as a drummer, which is very important to me, but now I also want to be recognized as a singer and writer. Maybe this will encourage other drummers to sing and write more, because a lot of drummers can do more than just play drums.

RM: You and Stan Penridge have been writing together for a long time. Do you find him easy to work with?

PC: We have a great chemistry. I don't know how it works, but it does. He'll come up with a melody, or I'll come up with a melody, or he will come up with a chorus and I'll come up with a verse, and we both write lyrics.

RM: Now that the album is out, do you plan to do a tour?

PC: I want to tour as soon as possible, but I won't go out until I have the best musicians. Finding the best does not come easy.

RM: Are you holding auditions?

PC: Yes, and it has been difficult. But I'm getting a lot of help from my producer, David Wolfert. He knows a ton of great studio musicians, so I may be going

every word to you from any Beatles' song.

RM: Who do you think your audience will be?

PC: I think I had my own cult following with Kiss, and while I will probably lose some of them, I think a lot of them will go my way. I think I'll gain a lot, too, because I have a feeling that heavy metal is just relating to 10-year olds, but my music should relate to a wider age group. In fact, I can see me playing Carnegie Hall quicker than Madison Square Garden.

RM: Do you think your group might ever perform with Kiss?

PC: We play two different styles of music. I doubt if we would ever be on the same bill. My manager asked me if I would consider appearing with Kiss to sing "Beth." Maybe I will someday. It might be fun to come on one of their shows and do a song. As far as records go, I might use them for a couple of songs on one of my albums, or I might play something on one of their albums sometime.

RM: You have been using Pearl drums for a long time. How did you become associated with them?

PC: There is a great drum store in New York called Professional Percussion Center. A guy named Frank Ippolito used to own it. What a great guy! We

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GEORGE MARSH

Exploring Self-Awareness

by Charles M. Bernstein

Photos by Gary Evans Leyton



There is a rare group of people in the world of percussion that are called "drummer's drummers". George Marsh is a member of that prestigious group. George Marsh is an honest person who not only was very thoughtful and articulate in his responses, but also has a high degree of integrity. When talking to George, it became obvious that he is passionately involved with music and percussion.

His talents and abilities are considerable. George Marsh is not only an outstanding performer, but is an innovative teacher, author, composer and a clinician for the Slingerland Drum Company. He was also a corecipient of the Peabody Award for his work as co-producer for Standard Oil's 10-record Music Maker series.

Eclecticism is another value that George holds in high esteem and it is reflected in this partial list of performing credits: Chuck Berry, Michel Le Grande, Morgana King, Jerry Hahn, Mel Martin's Listen and Denny Zeitlin. He can also be heard on the motion picture sound tracks of The Invasion of the Body Snatchers and The Black Stallion.

CB: Assuming no one has ever heard of you, what would you answer to the question, "Who is George Marsh?"

GM: I'd start off by saying I'm a fellow musician.

CB: That's the way you would like to think of yourself?

GM: I think in terms of the greats as being fellow musicians too. We all play music and we love music and the degree to which I may be afraid of someone because they're so great is the degree that my thinking is in error. Really, they're just human beings and they are communicating, they are giving the gift of their ability to transmit music. Music to me is like magic. Maybe I shouldn't say this, but music is related to God. But I don't have a definition of what God is. There's something magical about it, it's life, it's living. The reason I like music, the reason I'm in it is because of the magic that has bitten me. The really great players like Shelly Manne and Louis Bellson give you that feeling.

CB: They exude it. What bothers you about trying to be creative?

GM: Trying to be creative has always been a bothersome thing to me, just trying to be creative at all. It's difficult to be creative by trying to be creative. A truly creative act or event just seems to come and there's nothing I can really do about that.

CB: If you try to force it, or say to yourself, "I'm going to be creative between the hours of two and four . . ."

GM: It won't work.

CB: Or it seldom does.

GM: What I can really do as a player is learn my craft, and learning my craft means learning how to live, keeping my body in shape, my personal relationships clear.

CB: Playing then is only one aspect of your total self, it's not the whole thing.

GM: A long time ago I figured out that for me personally, I needed to work on everything. Not just drumming with my personal life going to hell. Not playing out as much as a lot of people, but playing. Not striving as much as a lot of people for the fame, but doing some. That's why I teach, because I find I need that. Just looking at playing, looking at how to play, because I'm still learning to do that.

CB: As a drummer, what kind of music gives you the most satisfaction?

GM: Well, that's one of my problems. The kind of music I like spans such a wide variety, it truly does. I really do like playing Be Bop and a little hard rock, and I really like good country music and a good folk singer. I like totally free improvisation. The experiments of somebody like Steve Reich. I like African music and I like Sambas. Denny Zeitlin, who I work with, is really capable of playing all those types of music, and Mel Graves is capable of doing that.

CB: Since you like so many different types of music, would you say that a band that is eclectic in nature is best suited to your creative desires?

GM: Well, if I'm going to be in a band and devote a lot of time and energy to it, then the band will be that way. I found that out. If I do a short stint with someone, I'll play what they want. When I played with Michel Le Grande, I played Michel Le Grande music.

CB: And that's just good professionalism. When they hire you, you know up front the type of music they're doing. Then it becomes a thing of trying to fulfill their needs and doing the best you can.

GM: But if I'm going to work with a band it will be a labor of love. And if it's a labor of love, it has to be a labor of love, rather than, "I'm going to play with you because I'll be famous." I gave that one up a long time ago. I play all kinds of music, but I interpret and listen and react with the energy and spirit of jazz. You know, sometimes I listen to myself and I say "God Damn" it doesn't sound like anybody, and sometimes you don't hit the mark and sometimes you listen to it and say, "Yeah!" "Right!" When I listened to the concert Mel (Graves) and I did, I could hear it two ways: as being out on a limb and as nice music.

CB: That's the concert you did in November 1979 in Berkeley, which was broadcast on KPFA Radio, with Mel on acoustic

"TRYING TO BE CREATIVE HAS ALWAYS BEEN A BOTHERSOME THING TO ME, JUST TRYING TO BE CREATIVE AT ALL. IT'S DIFFICULT TO BE CREATIVE BY TRYING TO BE CREATIVE. A TRULY CREATIVE ACT OR EVENT JUST SEEMS TO COME AND THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO ABOUT THAT."

bass and yourself on drums and percussion.

GM: It had a lot of potential, but it wasn't totally there.

CB: But an awful lot of it was.

GM: Yeah, a lot of it was.

CB: I don't applaud the radio very often.

GM: Maybe you heard us out on a limb.

CB: It was an unusual concept. The fact that it was just bass and drums. You both played very full and nobody felt any emptiness.

GM: I really appreciate positive feedback or critical feedback. I appreciate both. But the point is maybe when an artist gets further and further out on a limb, so to speak, it can very easily become more into focus for a lot of other people, nonmusicians too. So that when you're half way in the middle, not quite doing what you want, or working your way out there, it's okay, but finally you say, "I'm going to play it the way I really hear it."

CB: What you're talking about is honesty.

GM: Yeah, it would be honest to be in the middle, but it would be an awkward stage where you're going to be learning your craft too. People react positively when musicians take chances. They react to a new piece of music that a musician has just learned and the player doesn't know it as well as something they've been playing for two years. I've noticed this lot. But it's a fact that when musicians have to make themselves "haul ass" and be extremely conscious, people really dig that.

CB: Is it correct to say then that you are a strong believer in tradition?

GM: I love Baby Dodds, Gene Krupa and Buddy Rich and all of those swing guys. That's what turned me on to the music. I'm not going to turn my back on that. Man, like just the sound of



the way Gene Krupa played the rim shots. There's almost nobody who does that "Whapp".

CB: Yeah, there's a little overtone that he gets off the drum when he plays a rim shot.

GM: Also, I used to listen to George Wettling on records.

CB: Are those the records he made with Eddie Condon?

GM: Yeah. Oh man, those were some good sessions and they were hot. I like hot music like that, really cooking, and it still comes out in my playing some way. And I also like the tradition of Max Roach because of the logic of his solos. Beautiful construction. And "Papa" Jo Jones for dynamics and ways of taking rhythms and twisting them around in different ways that are totally original. He was really into dynamic fluidness which other drummers didn't do very much.

CB: Don Lamond had one of the best descriptions of Jo Jones. He said, "Jo Jones doesn't play like a machine gun, he plays like the wind".

GM: Beautiful.

CB: Earlier when I asked you the first question, the first drummer you mentioned was Shelly Manne. I was wondering why he popped into your mind first. Was Shelly somebody you listened to a lot?

GM: Yes, he was really important. I quickly turned on to Shorty Rogers and Shelly Manne. One of the first albums I got was one of those Shorty Rogers-Shelly Manne collaborations. The thing that got me about Shelly was that he had all the fire and intensity but he also had a melodiousness and a tonality of different colors which no other drummer had at that time. I loved guys like Max Roach and Art Blakey but they weren't as melodic as Shelly.

CB: Lately I've been seeing him play with different groups and he's playing as good if not better than when I first saw him 23 years ago. What I mean is that he's still youthful.

GM: That's a good word because that's what I hear in his playing. Youthfulness. He's always very youthful and positive.

CB: Even though you don't necessarily sound like Shelly you

remind me of him. Would you say that comes from Shelly's influence?

GM: Sure, also everybody is influenced by Max Roach. How can you not be influenced by Max if you've heard him. You want to be, it's nothing you want to fight. You want to be influenced by him and also by Art Blakey. I remember hearing Shelly Manne records when I could tell he had heard Art. There definitely was an influence. I'm sure those guys respect one another. When I was coming up there were some beautiful players I saw and learned from. Phil Hulsey, I could say, was one of my first teachers. Nobody knows about Phil Hulsey.

CB: Who is he?

GM: He's a guy that plays very good melodic drums and played in St. Louis with a pianist, Herb Drury, that nobody knows about, except people in St. Louis, and a bass player named Jerry Cherry. These guys would let me, the little young punk, sit in and they'd tolerate me and let me play a few tunes and then I'd listen to them. What I got from those guys was that they weren't competitive. Phil Hulsey wasn't competitive, he'd say, "Sure you can sit in, if you play you can sit in".

CB: He wasn't insecure.

GM: No way, and the way these musicians all played, like they had "big ears", they really played by ear. But everything was very intricately put together. They would play things that had a lot of dynamic changes. A solo itself wouldn't just stay on one dynamic level, it would go through all kinds of dynamic changes.

CB: Little tensions and releases.

GM: All over the place. Sometimes in one measure. Everytime they'd play the tune it was different. Okay, I come out to San Francisco and this is the way I like to play. They think I'm crazy.

CB: I know that feeling, a lot of musicians don't know how to deal with it.

GM: Some people certainly do know how to deal with it but most don't. As far as I'm concerned that's how you play music, you change, you're moving all the time.

CB: Was there anything else you wanted to say about Phil Hulsey?

GM: Not only did he teach me about noncompetitiveness and how to use my ear, he used brushes beautifully. He had a lot of ways he played with brushes and got different sounds and he was beautiful to watch and listen to. He's very careful about his sounds. He always made sure the sound was coming out right. He tuned his drums and his cymbals were always well-chosen.

CB: You play odd meters with a high degree of proficiency. What advice do you have for drummers who want to become more proficient in this area?

GM: Well, let me say this, what happens is that drummers do ask questions about this all the time. But I don't play an odd time for people until it reaches a certain place where it is satisfying to me.

CB: Do you also mean comfortable?

GM: Comfortable and makes sense to me and has a certain property that makes for interest, musical interest and not just intellectual interest. Some of them I don't play at all, others I do. My feelings about these different time signatures is that in all of them you can eventually find some way of presenting them, make them palatable so to speak, and unique and enjoyable, all of them have something to them. Just the fact that it is an unusual time signature producing a new kind of ebb and flow is enough reason to present it. If it's really delightful, you keep doing it and if it isn't you just let it fade out.

CB: Some drummers, when they're learning an odd meter like 5/4, have trouble being fluid with it. Are there methods that a drummer can use to become more fluid?

GM: Sure, you don't have to play the first beat of an odd meter loudly. You have to know where it is, and the musical phrases should flow through the downbeat. Usually that takes playing the downbeat for a while, then experimenting with

phrases that don't necessarily have the downbeat on every bar. Maybe with two bar phrases so that you'll hear this rhythm not hitting the downbeat which will be a surprise, but you'll get it after the second bar. Sooner or later it will turn into a melodic flow that has to do with the tensions and releases of 5/4 and the particular pattern that you're in. The way to become fluid is to study the time signatures, play them a lot and log the hours like you would log flying time. There's no other way, you just do it.

CB: It's just hard work, a lot of repetition.

GM: You play with players that are always trying to work on that, going over the borderline. You make some mistakes, go ahead and make some mistakes, but don't make the mistake of constantly repeating an ostinato pattern again and again. That pattern will put you to sleep, that's one you shouldn't do. Do the ostinato pattern but stay awake, break away from those patterns when it's time, experiment.

their posture. I say something else, too. You can learn that rhythm but it would be better to take a year on your posture and then you will get the rhythm easily, maybe in one day.

CB: It seems that you are really teaching a type of energy conservation. Eliminate wasted motion or incorrect motion.

GM: And it will feel good to the student. It will feel good to conserve energy and use it in correct ways.

CB: One of the fears beginning drummers often express is that if they take lessons it will spoil their natural ability and their individuality will be compromised. How do you, as a teacher, overcome this fear?

GM: I overcome it by teaching in a way that doesn't include tension. I don't teach techniques that require tensing the muscles. I don't teach techniques that require a student to play this way or in that style. I try to teach them how to relax their muscles and use them optimally. If the student looks at it, he'll see

"A LONG TIME AGO I FIGURED OUT THAT FOR ME PERSONALLY, I NEEDED TO WORK ON EVERYTHING. NOT JUST DRUMMING WITH MY PERSONAL LIFE GOING TO HELL. NOT PLAYING OUT AS MUCH AS A LOT OF PEOPLE, BUT PLAYING. NOT STRIVING AS MUCH AS A LOT OF PEOPLE FOR THE FAME, BUT DOING SOME. THAT'S WHY I TEACH, BECAUSE I FIND I NEED THAT. JUST LOOKING AT PLAYING, LOOKING AT HOW TO PLAY, BECAUSE I'M STILL LEARNING TO DO THAT."

CB: What would you say are some major weaknesses that instructors exhibit in teaching the drums.

GM: The main weakness that I see is that instructors don't deal with the student's overall sense of body awareness in relation to drumming. When drumming, you're using your hands and feet; but what about your head position, your neck and shoulder joints, your back, the whole gamut? Most students that come to me have a problem with their body awareness. The ones that come from other teachers very often have more problems than students who have taught themselves.

CB: More problems? I would think it would be the other way around.

GM: Many of these students have been taught bad habits, physical habits, because they wanted to develop a certain kind of technique for getting a sound out, or getting a certain speed, but at the expense of tight shoulders, necks, all kinds of weirdness. It's horrible. I get disgusted by it. People come in that have been taught these bad habits for years and it takes me 9 to 10 months of working with these people to break these habits. In a certain sense what I try to do is Psycho-physical Reeducation. That's a term I'm borrowing from the Alexander technique which I studied. I have also studied yoga and T'ai Chi, all of which help you to become conscious of your movements.

CB: Rather than going into each specific one, do all the techniques you mentioned deal with body awareness?

GM: Yes, your overall sense of movement becomes more conscious and easy. You can't tell someone just to sit straight, you have to work on why someone isn't sitting straight and work on certain kinds of exercises. But of course, I concentrate mainly on drumming with my students.

CB: If a student doesn't want to take these various courses how do you apply Psycho-physical Reeducation to them? Do you have any specific examples?

GM: The most I can do is show them certain approaches to playing with all four limbs and ways of dealing with the energy flow inside their body when they're playing. I offer them suggestions such as "Why don't you take a yoga class, or T'ai Chi?" I feel some students have really profited by taking some of these courses, incredibly so. Some people are ready for that, others aren't. However, when someone comes to me and wants to learn a specific drum pattern and I see that person making the mistake of bad posture, I'm sorry, but I can't rightfully, in my own conscience, tell them week after week to learn a rhythm when I know that the real problem is that they have to check out

it's very logical and it is a good way to use their arms and legs. I think it's a legitimate fear for a student, that he or she might not find the right teacher, because a teacher can teach you things that screw you up and waste your time. I don't particularly work on that fear with them. I work on what I think is the technique that is logical as far as correct muscle usage is concerned and that won't hurt the student. A drummer can play any way he wants after learning my technique. He can play tight or loose and use his muscles this way or that way. However, if you're taught a specific way, such as "You have to use your muscles tight in here and exert a lot of pressure," you are liable to develop muscles in an unbalanced way.

CB: In the book you are writing, you describe it as a method which deals with the inner approach to drumming. What is the inner approach?

GM: That explanation is not quite good enough, the inner approach. I'll explain it the best I can. Drummers need to pay attention to how their bodies work. Almost all of us make mistakes in the way we use our bodies to the detriment of ourselves. All of those things come down to habits that turn you off to what's happening in your body. This is what got me on the path, I had to start figuring out how to get correct posture again after making mistakes. I had to start looking at how I sat and how I used my arms and legs. You have to look at everything and I discovered that there were a lot of ways of relating to your four limbs when you play that I never thought of before. These have to do with, first of all, how each individual limb works. In other words, what is the best way I can play with each of these limbs? The next thing is how can I play with two of these limbs at a time? Any two. That means that I deal with all those groups of two limbs. Then there are three at a time, then four. That, very quickly, explains what a person can work on for years.

CB: In other words, the book deals with coordination exercises?

GM: One, two, three and four way coordination. Leading up to playing rhythms, cross-rhythms, more than one rhythm played at a time. This is what the drums are about. What I feel is different about this book is that I'm working on a classical technique for the drum set, which, of course, doesn't exist. It is the beginning of an approach towards that. It is an approach that can go in any direction and that is what makes it different. The rudimental methods that have been written are written basically for the snare drum and that's only one combination of two limbs. That leaves five other combinations of two limbs to deal

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JOHN BONHAM

In Retrospect

by James Morton

Without doubt, the dominating force in heavy metal rock during the entire decade of the 1970's was Led Zeppelin. John Bonham led the way with his wildly enthusiastic style, both on stage and in the studio. His syncopated but rock steady rhythms fit hand in glove with guitarist Jimmy Page's riffs. A pioneer in heavy metal rock drumming, Bonham was also one of the first to employ an oversized drumset. *Rolling Stone* magazine described a John Bonham performance as, "The aural equivalent of watching Clint Eastwood club eight bad guys over the head with a two-by-four while driving a derailed locomotive through their hideout."

While possessing an exuberant style, Bonham maintained control of his set. One of his strengths was a remarkable bass drum action, a factor most noticeable in the following transcriptions. John Bonham's recent death in England creates a gap in rock drumming that will not be filled easily. This anthology is a collection of the beats that propelled Led Zeppelin to the forefront of the heavy metal scene for a full decade, and serves as a tribute to their drummer, John Bonham.

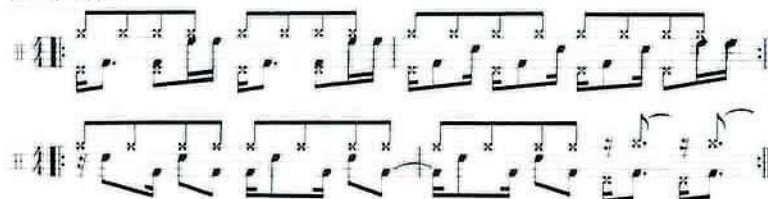
Ride/crash Hi-Hat (open) Hi-Hat (with foot) Snare Bass Drum

Hi-Hat Hi-Hat (partially open) Tom-Tom Floor Tom Hi-Hat (with foot)

1. ALL MY LOVE

2. BABE, I'M GONNA LEAVE YOU

3. BLACK DOG



4. BOOGIE WITH STU



5. BRING IT ON HOME



6. CANDY STORE ROCK



7. CAROUSELAMBRA



8. COMMUNICATIONS BREAKDOWN



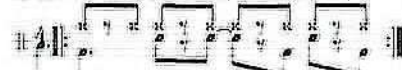
9. CUSTARDPIE



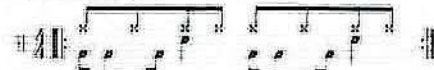
10. DAZED AND CONFUSED



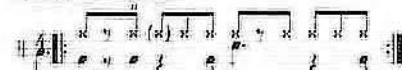
11. DOWN BY THE SEASIDE (moderate shuffle)



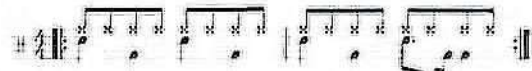
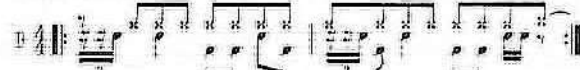
12. D'YER MAKER



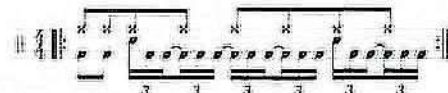
13. FOOL IN THE RAIN



14. FOR YOUR LIFE



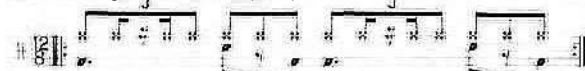
15. GOOD TIMES, BAD TIMES



16. HOUSES OF THE HOLY



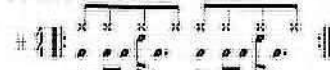
17. I CAN'T QUIT YOU BABY (Blues)



18. I'M GONNA CRAWL



19. IMMIGRANT SONG



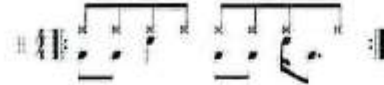
20. IN MY TIME OF DYING



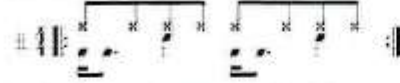
21. IN THE EVENING



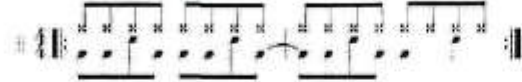
22. IN THE LIGHT



23. KASHMIR



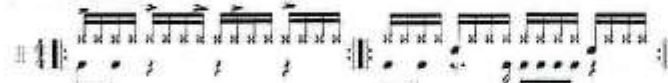
24. LIVING LOVING MAID (SHE'S JUST A WOMAN)



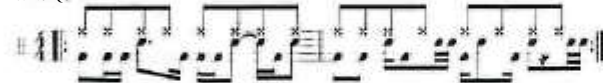
25. MISTY MOUNTAIN HOP



26. NIGHT FLIGHT



27. NO QUARTER



28. NOBODY'S FAULT BUT MINE



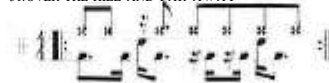
29. TILE OCEAN



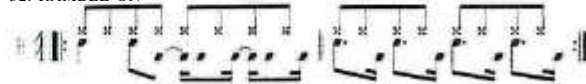
30. OUT ON THE TILES



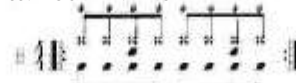
31. OVER THE HILL AND FAR AWAY



32. RAMBLE ON



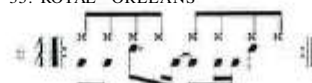
33. ROCK AND ROLL



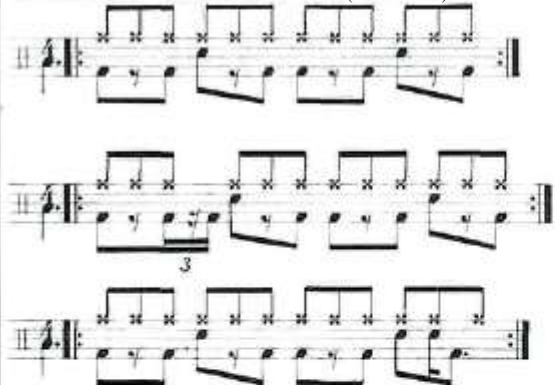
34. THE ROVER



35. ROYAL ORLEANS



36. SINCE I'VE BEEN LOVING YOU (slow blues)



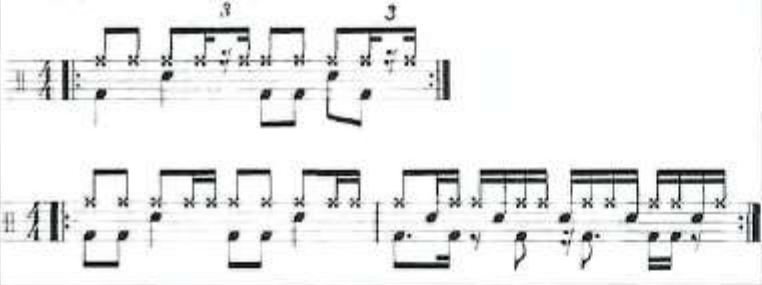
37. SOUTH-BOUND SAUREZ



38. THE SONG REMAINS THE SAME



39. STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN



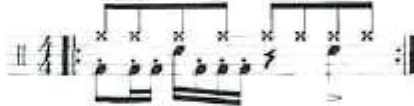
40. TEA FOR ONE



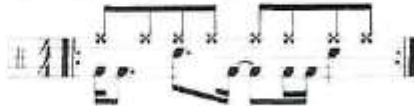
41. TEN YEARS GONE



42. THE WANTON SONG



43. WHEN THE LEVEE BREAKS



44. WHOLE LOTTA LOVE



Rod Morgenstein

by Robin Tolleson

When Rod Morgenstein was growing up he heard the saying, "There are musicians, and drummers." Now, as the driving force behind the musically diverse Dixie Dregs, he lays that distinction to rest. The 27 year old is trained in piano and "legit" percussion as well as drums, and that training has led to his very "musical" drumming style.

"I think that's the big thing about Rod," says Dixie Dregs' guitarist-composer Steve Morse. "He can understand the music all the way. He doesn't just think of music in terms of rhythms."

Rod is an original member of the Dixie Dregs, having performed on all three of their albums on Capricorn Records, as well as their Arista debut, Dregs of the Earth. When home in Atlanta, Rod works some with a lyricist, on compositions that he admits are not within the format of the Dregs. But given the Dregs hectic (to put it mildly) road schedule, and Rod's enthusiasm over the band's music, it is clear that his energies are strongly channeled into the continued success of the Dixie Dregs, a rise that Rod has seen from the bottom up. Proof of that rise was evident the weekend we spoke, as the Dregs sold out three shows at San Francisco's Old Waldorf.

RT: I heard about the concert the Dregs did at the Roxy in L.A. where you had quite a few well known musical contemporaries in the audience.

RM: Yeah. That was fantastic. First off, the way it started was we heard that we were going to be playing with Billy Cobham for three nights. And I think that was the first of those kind of dates, where we were finally going to be dealing with some really good talent. And so it was my chance to be scared to death, you know, because of Billy Cobham's reputation, and how much I respect him as a player. So, we get there, do a couple shows. And then Friday night comes around, the second night, and it's the early show. And the Roxy has a curtain. The curtain comes up, and we're in the midst of the first song, playing around, you know. And all of us started glancing

through the front row of the theater. And in a straight line, I don't remember the exact lineup, there was Jaco. He had brought Stanley Clarke, Lenny White, Michael Walden, John McLaughlin, Tom Scott, it was unbelievable. And I understand Jeff Beck was somewhere else in the club. So, it was frightening, because I think Jaco had told all his friends about us, and he didn't want them to be disappointed. But it worked out real good, because most of them came upstairs, sat and talked with us, and seemed to enjoy the show. McLaughlin kissed Steve's guitar. I mean, Steve idolizes McLaughlin, and just gave him the guitar and asked him if he would sign it. John just took it and kissed it.

RT: Tell me about pre-Dregs Rod Morgenstein. Aren't you from New York?

RM: Yeah, born in the city, and I lived my first year or two in Manhattan. Then with the Long Island rush, after the war, the suburbs became the big thing and Long Island was new, unexplored territory. So my parents moved out there, and that's where it all began. They told me that I always banged on things, so they had an idea that I was musically oriented. They had me take a few private lessons on piano when I was young. Everybody has to go through that. And then in fifth grade, when I was ten, I got my first drum pad, and gigantic, fat, marching drum sticks. There were about three other guys in the grade that started. So we studied with the band teacher, who didn't know drums. When I was thirteen or fourteen I studied privately with a guy named Howie Mann, who taught me how to read. We dealt a lot with drum charts, reading transcriptions from Woody Herman records, and Stan Kenton, things like that. The highlight of each lesson was when he gave us a chart and we'd come in and read it. He taught me how to set up fills, reading the horn line if you didn't have a drum chart and lots of times you don't get a drum chart. I remember I started as a righty, because when I was 10 the band teacher didn't know the difference between lefty or

righty, everyone played the same. You know, your right hand holds the stick this way, and the left hand has that weird way. So when I took my first lesson with Howie Mann, he knew immediately that I was a lefty. And I think at that time, that new style of double backward drumming that Lenny White and Billy Cobham do, was unheard of. I mean it just wasn't a thing that people knew about. So he had me completely switch from righty to lefty, which was tragic at first. I remember before doing that, how when I'd play on the righty set, I'd always start my fills lefty and come out on the wrong hand. I do recall that. So he had me switch around, and it was real hard for several months. But he told me to bear with it, and it would pay off. So now it's thirteen years down the line, and I'm glad he did that. I'd be in a lot of trouble, I think.

RT: So you don't play the style of Cobham and Lenny White.

RM: No, I play like a righty backwards.

RT: Do you think you gained power in your right hand as a result of starting out that way?

RM: Yeah, I think it helped a little bit for ambidexterity. I spent a little time trying to work out playing that way, where the hands wouldn't be crossing over, but it's really time consuming. It's not the kind of thing that I'd want to experiment on stage. But you can really come up with a lot of great funk things by playing backwards. Just do the licks the way you would normally do them, except instead of the hi-hat being hit with your left hand, as in my case, the snare's going to be hit. And it makes for some really interesting patterns that you wouldn't normally come up with.

RT: So that's what you're doing to come up with some of the really syncopated stuff.

RM: That's what it is. I think that's how a lot of the guys, like Gadd and Garibaldi, must come up with some of those things. Certain things just don't feel right when your hands are crossed over, because you lose power with the hand



Photo by Greg Savalin

that's hitting the snare underneath. I mean, it can only come up so high. And where you have this kind of freedom, where it's not the crossover, other things take over.

RT: Did you attend college in New York, or go straight to the University of Miami?

RM: I did my first two years at Nassau Community College, on Long Island, and got down all the basic requirements, liberal arts. And I got to study with a great legit percussionist, Ronald Gould, who plays with the New York City Ballet and the Jeffrey Ballet. He sort of showed me around into mallets and timpani and snare drum, and that whole approach to things. And he started getting my thinking geared towards the New England Conservatory of Music or Juilliard. That's what he was setting me up for. And I would always keep in touch with Howie Mann, who always hoped that I'd be going in a more drum set direction. And he'd get freaked out when he'd hear me start talking about this legit way of life, because he thought I was making a mistake. And Ronnie Gould, the legit percussionist, was concerned that I wouldn't be going the legit way. But all in all, I think studying with all these different people pays off, because it helps you think in a roundabout, well-rounded way. So I was with that guy for the two years at Nassau Community College. I don't even know if I graduated there, but I had half the credits for a four year degree. And then one of the teachers at Nassau Community College, who taught an arranging class, was a graduate of Miami, and he suggested I look into it. So I went down there, checked it out, and really liked what I saw.

RT: Did you know then that Jaco Pastorius, Pat Metheny, and that bunch were hanging out there?

RM: No, I'd never heard of any of them. Living on Long Island is a pretty sheltered existence. I didn't spend a whole lot of time in the city, which looking back on I should have. All the guys that I idolized lived there, and were will-

ing to give lessons if the price was right. But I was in my little cocoon on the island. Going down to Miami, I thought more of myself than once I got down there. I really thought I was going to make waves. Because in high school in New York state they have all these NSMA competitions. You know, you go and they have all these competitive games to get into the all-county band, or all-neighborhood. And then the big thing was the New York State Concert Band or Orchestra, or the jazz band. And just as a joke, I went and auditioned for the New York State Jazz Band, which no one thinks they're going to get. I went in, and it was a real simple audition. I had to read the figures that Howie Mann had taught me all about, and it was a joke, it was so simple. And somehow I got it, I got into that thing. So, of course that helps swell your head a little bit. So I go down to Miami, and I thought I was pretty good, and it really put me in my place. Because now you're dealing with serious minded players who are really way ahead of you in jazz. I mean, there wasn't jazz, in the sense of what Tony Williams and Miles Davis was doing, that kind of thing doesn't happen on Long Island. There it's more big band, where the drummer is playing bass drum on all fours, hi-hat on two and four, and you're going ding-ding-da-ding. That's what I could do. And then coming down to the University of Miami, all of a sudden guys are breaking up time. The hi-hat's not happening on two and four, it's working its way around with the hands. You know, more along the lines of what DeJohnette does, and the bass drum no longer hits every beat. It's just popping in and out, accentuating places. That freaked me out, because I always thought something happens between school and being a great player. Like, you're not "there" as a student, I mean it happens afterwards. And then I went down there, and here are these guys, like Danny Gottlieb, playing with Pat Metheny. He was one of them, and he's one of my favorites. He was doing the stuff that

I thought a few years down the line I'd be doing. So I was put in my place, and didn't really know anybody, went down as a stranger. And that's how it was for the first semester. It's a real cliquish place, but I guess that's how anything is. You tend to hang out with people who you can relate to. If you were a monster player, all your friends were monsters, and if you weren't, you weren't really friends with them until you could prove that you were worthy of it. I don't think it's a bad thing, or maliciously done, but that's just the way it is. You know, there are levels. Then the Dixie Dregs started to happen. I took piano down there as well as drums. I never knew where I wanted to go. So I took an improv class, but I took it on piano instead. And before knowing any of the guys in the band now, there was this weird guy who had long blond hair, and didn't wear any shoes. And he was the only guy in the school who played a Tele-body- a solid body- and not a big fat hollow body guitar. His tone was more rock and roll. You know, it turned out to be Steve. And Allen, who's violinist, was also in the class. He was a classical major but he was trying to learn to improvise a little bit on violin. So just through the course of that class, you find out whose playing you like and whose playing you don't like. And we got together and jammed a couple times. And by next semester, the Rock Ensemble #2 was formed, which later became the Dixie Dregs. There was nothing like this band happening. It's really a jazz school, and they try to give you the basics of bebop and trace it up. There's really not any rock and roll, or there wasn't at that point. There was a rock ensemble there, but it was more fusion, jazz-rock, "Lifetime," or who knows. So we became the Rock Ensemble #2.

RT: You said that you weren't sure whether you wanted to go into keyboards or drums?

RM: Yeah, I kept going in and out of it. The school was weird a little bit in that even though you're a jazz major, if



you're a drummer, you study legit percussion. They didn't really have a drum set teacher for advanced players. So, in that respect, the only real drum set learning you got was by playing with other people. And I always wondered whether I wanted to be a jazz piano player. So I worked it out one year to be a piano major instead of a drum major, so I could take private lessons with the guy there. And that was fantastic. That was great. I don't really know what made me end up with the drums, but I had to make a decision, and I think I was a little bit better at drums. The piano part was going to be a real uphill battle. And the band already had a keyboard player, so I played drums. And once you go on the road, everything's over. Really, you can't pursue that many things.

RT: Was Steve Morse writing a lot of material when you met him?

RM: Yeah. I think he's been writing since he's played guitar, which is probably age twelve or something.

RT: Was it hard for a New Yorker to adapt to playing Southern boogie-rock and bluegrass?

RM: Umm, not really. I didn't really have an affinity towards country music at all, and I love it now. Because the way the band works is we do everything in doses. We just touch on a little of this and a little of that. But once we do it, we get away from it for a few songs, and maybe come back. I bore quickly of things. Everyone in the band does. And we know that audiences do too. And even though certain styles aren't necessarily a challenge, as much of a challenge say for one instrument-like country music, oompah music for the drums isn't nearly as challenging as playing bebop or some up-tempo things. It's fun to lay back once in awhile and watch the other guys in the band do what they're best at, and also watching the crowd. Because it's all entertainment. I mean, we're not up there playing for ourselves.

RT: When Steve introduces a new song to the band, does he have a drum chart for you?

RM: No. He'll come in and have a

pretty good idea of the song. And he'll start with one of the guys, to show them either melodies or harmonies to the song. And I'll just kind of sit around and listen to it take shape, and get ideas from that. It seems like, if you have any kind of brain, just by listening to a piece of music you're going to start formulating ideas on how to approach playing it. You know, starting very basically with, "Well, is it a rock song? Is it a blues? Is it a swing?" This kind of thing. And then it's just a question of hearing the kicks, where they're going to come in. And then talking about, "Well, how much do I want to set up this fill, and do I want to double this with the bass, or try to combine the counterpoint between the bass and the guitar, and the keyboards and the violin." And once the song is learned, people throw out ideas to each other, of ways to better it by simplifying or adding. There's no drum charts. Nothing's written down. Steve composes in his head— even all the multiple layers of sounds that he comes up with. Like "I'm Freaking Out," which has four or five different things happening at one time. He doesn't use tape recorders, he thinks it's artificial. It's phenomenal to me.

RT: Lenny White said recently that when he was learning to play drums, the technical side, the rudiments, became hard for him so he devised his own way of playing. Do you have more of a rudimentary background?

RM: It's probably more like what he said, where you learn them when you're young, and then once you get them under control and know what they are, you try to forget about them. And it's really funny that you asked that, because I was just talking with Roy Burns a few days ago. And he's a real analytical, intelligent guy. I mean he's really brilliant. He was trying to explain something to me, and he said, "Now, how do you play a double paradiddle?" And I got flushed all over my face, because I didn't even know what a double paradiddle was at that point! I'm sure I use them when I play, but I wasn't sure if it was left-right-left-right-left-left, or if that was a triplet

paradiddle. I've forgotten the names of all of them. It was embarrassing.

RT: Do you have a formula that you go by when you play a drum solo?

RM: I have an idea where I'm going to start and where I'm going to take it. And it seems like over the course of months, it takes a little turn and goes somewhere else. But they're not totally different night after night. I mean, now I'm into a particular thing where I like to start it a certain way, and then bring it down. It's sort of an unstructured structured solo.

RT: Are you usually happy with your drum solos, or hard to please?

RM: Hard to please. I carry frustration with me all the time. It seems like a night that I'm proud of what I did is I in 50. And then most of the other nights are "I did alright." And then every so often there's a pathetic night.

RT: Do you have certain things that you know will get an audience cheering?

RM: Yes. That's a funny thing that you learn just from the experience of doing it night after night. Sure. And that's the same way we plan our sets and encores. I mean, you have an idea. Crowds don't vary that much. They like the things that you learn about that really aren't that important—playing fast, building with a crashing, thunderous explosion—those kind of things. The swirling of sticks and shaking your head, not that I say "OK, I'm going to shake my head now." Sometimes it's the only way to be able to play that particular passage. It's weird. I'm still not comfortable playing drum solos, because I'd like to be able to be more dynamic in softer spots. I'd like to be able to not freak out that I'm only caressing a cymbal for a little bit. I get uptight sometimes, and feel that much more needs to be happening.

RT: Do you have a routine practice schedule?

RM: Not really. On the road it's virtually impossible to practice. You can't play on your set, so you've got to have whatever you're going to have together at home, before the first day that you're on the road. The only practicing I do is on rugs of hotels. When I'm home, yeah, I do more of a rigid practice schedule, where I get on the set every day, and work on those things that were weak on the last tour.

RT: Is there a certain set of exercises that you do?

RM: I don't practice the exact same thing every time. I think it might be a good idea to do that, but I practice what has freaked me out recently. For example, before we left for this trip we went to a place in Atlanta and saw Chick Corea. And he's got this drummer who amazed me, his name is Tom Brechtlein. He's just phenomenal to me, left my

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- 4) It is not necessary to vote in all twelve categories. Leave blank any category for which you do not have a true, firm opinion.
- 5) Fill in your selections and sign. Clip your ballot and mail to: MODERN DRUMMER READERS POLL, 1000 Clifton Ave., Clifton, NJ 07013.
- 6) Ballots must be postmarked no later than March 10, 1981. Winners will be announced in the June, 1981 issue of MD.

NOTE*

* HALL OF FAME: Vote for the artist, living or dead, who in your opinion has

made the greatest single contribution to the art of drumming. Gene Krupa and Buddy Rich have already won MD's Hall of Fame award. Previous winners are not eligible for this category.

MOST PROMISING NEW DRUMMER: This category is reserved for those artists recently brought to the public's attention.

* **BEST RECORDED PERFORMANCE:** Vote for the best recording by a drummer as a leader or member of a group. Limit your selection to recordings made within the last twelve months. Please include the artist's name and complete title of the recording and the album from which it came.

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BIG BAND DRUMMER _____

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(special effects, tabla, etc.)

MOST PROMISING NEW DRUMMER _____

BEST RECORDED PERFORMANCE _____

Rediscovering HAWAIIAN DRUMS

by John B. Faraola
Photos by Catherine Buchanan

There is a renaissance happening in Hawaii. Throughout the islands, natives and non-natives alike are rediscovering a culture that has been neglected and almost eradicated over the past two centuries. One of the foremost components of Hawaii, and most zealously studied, is the complex mixture of dance, music, and religion known as the hula.

With very few exceptions, the only music indigenous to Hawaii is that associated with the performance of the hula. Almost all of the musical instruments designed by the Hawaiians were for creating the dance meter or were dance implements. The majority of these instruments fall into the percussion category. Prior to the arrival of Christian missionaries, the Hawaiian melodic structure was limited to two or three notes. What abbreviated melody there was was conveyed through the dance chant which was usually augmented by the percussion instruments.

The practitioners of the hula were an elite class who ranked high in the religious hierarchy of their society. They were segregated by choice and until recently were an all male fraternity. It is reputed that members of the all male halau (hula schools) were homosexual but this point is debatable. Either way, most students agree that the instrument players and chanters of the hula group were special favorites of the hula master and received the "privilege" of playing rather than dancing.

A good number of Hawaiian instruments deserve the attention of modern percussionists. They are valuable not only for their historical and cultural collecting properties, but also because of their potential viability in modern music.

Pahu (temple drum). This is the largest drum used by the Hawaiians. It was brought to Hawaii from other points in Polynesia by the original Hawaiians. This drum is usually made from the trunk of the coconut palm although UIu (breadfruit) is occasionally substituted. The base of the trunk is used with the playing head attached to the wider bottom end. This often creates a head diameter of up to 18 inches. The pahu stands between 12 and 36 inches high. The original drums employed sharks belly skin heads. The modern drum makers have



switched to cowhide. The head is fastened to the drum by cord lacings on the exterior. The method of fastening the head to the cord and the cord to the wood varies tremendously. The pitch of the drum varies depending on the tightness of the lacing but is not variable while the drum is being played. The pahu is not hollow. There are two deep cavities (bottom and top) scraped into the wood which are separated by a one inch septum at the center. The purpose of this design is not altogether clear. One possibility is that this construction allows for the ornate carving of the bottom of the drum into a stand rather than a resonator.

The pahu was a ceremonial drum that was kept at the temple. It was played by the favorite student of the hula master. It was usually used in the performance of the hula although it was occasionally used for other religious purposes.

The pahu player knelt in the sand and extracted two tones by either hitting it with a forward thrust of the butt of the hand (high tone) or a downward slap of the full hand (lower tone).

The pahu's adaptability to modern music is somewhat limited. It has some lateral versatility in tones but in general it is a one pitch drum. For the collector, the pahu is a must. Even the modern drum makers take great pains to recreate the carvings of the "authentic" antiques. When buying a pahu, check with the drum maker to make sure the wood has been seasoned properly. Unseasoned coconut wood will crack before you can get it off the airplane.

Puniu (knee drum). This small drum is indigenous to Hawaii. It is made from

the hard inner shell of the coconut. The shell is halved and affixed with a shark-skin or cowhide head secured tightly by vertical cord lacings which pull against a horizontal cord wrapped at the base of the nut. It is played with a flexible cord beater, usually with the left hand. Most punius were constructed with straps with which they were tied to the knee of the player. A few of the drums, for some yet undiscovered reason, were equipped with a coconut wood stand. The puniu was used primarily in the hula and was played by the pahu player who played

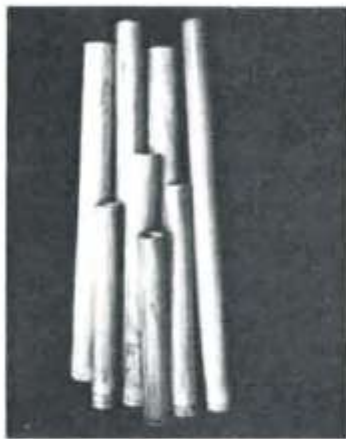


both drums at one time. The drum creates a high, sharp tone, much like the Latin American bongo.

This drum would lend itself easily to the collections of modern percussionists. Since the pitch and tone of the drum varies with the size of the nut, a number of these drums could be utilized as multi-voiced bongos. It is advisable to look for puniu that have been constructed on stands since several strapped to the knee might prove a little awkward.

Ka'ekeke (bamboo pipes). Ka'ekeke is the Hawaiian word used to describe a group of pieces of bamboo of varying lengths and widths. These pieces are open at one end and sealed by a growth node at the other. The node end of the bamboo is usually padded with cloth or breadfruit gum. The instrument is played by vertically striking the padded end against a stone or other hard surface. The pipe then resonates a short but very melodious tone with a pitch that varies depending on the length, width and diameter of the pipe. This instrument requires a good deal of skill in order to play it to its best advantage. When the pipe strikes the

hard surface it must be released slightly from the hand in order to allow the bamboo to reverberate to its fullest capacity. Then the tension must be reapplied before the pipe falls away so that the hand may hold the pipe on the upward swing.



The ka'ekeke was used as a dance implement and a chanting instrument. After the arrival of Christian missionaries and western music, the pipes were often cut to resonate in scale and were used by several players, much like handbells, to recreate western melodies.

Because of the tonal value of this instrument, a good group of ka'ekeke would enhance the collection of any serious percussionist. They can be tuned to a specified scale and should be made only of Hawaiian bamboo.

Ipu (gourd drum). There are several variations on the water gourd (calabash) drum throughout the world but there is one form that is indigenous to Hawaii. The double calabash (English) is made by the gluing of the large end of two gourds together in order to form one instrument. One end of the instrument is then cut off in order to allow the sound to escape. A holding strap is attached at the joint of the two gourds and the instrument is played by striking the bottom with the hand or on the ground. The sounds created by this instrument are not exceptionally dynamic and there seems to be very little difference between that of the double and single calabash. The Ipu was almost always used as a dance implement. Antique ipus may be

valuable to collectors and gourd drums of one form or another are occasionally used by modern percussionists.

Uli Uli (gourd shakers). The uli uli is a maraca made from a small water gourd and affixed with a feather ornament. The pitch is varied depending on the size of the gourd and the number of seeds inside. It was used by the Hawaiians



strictly as a dance implement. The uli uli is valuable to collectors because of the ornate feather decorations on both the antiques and the reproductions.

Pu'ili (split bamboo rattles). The pu'ili is a long slender piece of bamboo that has been cut leaving the growth node at one end. It is then split between 8 and 12 times along the length of the shaft to within 5 inches of the growth node. The tines created by the splits are about a quarter of an inch thick and rattle against one another when the instrument is struck softly. The sound created can best be described as a heavy rustle. The pu'ili is a dance implement and is usually played in pairs by dancers who hold one in each hand. Sometimes the dancers hit one pu'ili against the other which adds a "clack" sound to the rustle.

The pu'ili may have limited use as a modern percussion instrument but is not collectable because thousands are made for the tourist trade.

Ili'Ili (stone castanets). That's what they are, stone castanets. A dancer holds 4 smooth lava pebbles, 2 in each hand, and clacks them together much like castanets. The sound is very sharp because of the glassy nature of the lava. There are some very skillful ili'ili players in Hawaii although the instrument has little modern musical or collecting value.

Ulili (spinning gourd rattle). This instrument is comprised of 3 small water gourds attached through their centers to a stick. The two end gourds contain seeds and are stationary on the stick. The stick can rotate freely inside the middle gourd. There is a hole in the

middle gourd through which a pull string that is attached to and wound around the stick passes. A pull of the string sets the stick and the stationary gourds spinning. As the stick continues to spin it rewinds the pull cord in much the same way as a yoyo operates. The sound created by the seeds in the spinning outer gourd is somewhat like the sound of the Latin American afuche. This whizzing sound can be kept almost constant by a good player. The ulili was more a toy than a musical instrument to the ancient Hawaiians. Modern musicians may find limited use for the ulili and it is also a very interesting collector's piece.

Ka La'au (gauva wood hula sticks). Made of the hardwood guava, the sound of hula sticks closely resembles the sound of their rosewood cousins, claves. The sticks are cut in two lengths. The long one (24-36 inches) is held in the left hand along the shoulder, somewhat like a violin. The short one (10-15 inches) is held with the right hand and strikes the long one causing a slight resonance. The ka la'au were used by dancers to keep time. They have little modern musical or collecting value.

Ipu Hokiokio (gourd nose flute). This pear shaped gourd flute has two pitch holes and a blow hole. It is played by holding one nostril shut while blowing into the blow hole with the other. The ipu hokiokio was used by Hawaiian lovers to communicate over short distances. There are also some nose flutes made of bamboo (Ka Hokiokio). Although the ipu hokiokio has limited musical and collecting value, it is fun to play with.



Pu (shell trumpet). Made from large deep sea shells, the pu are played in the same manner as modern brass instruments. The top of the shell is cut away to form a mouth piece. When the instrument is played it emits one loud bullhorn-like note. The pu had a number of uses in the Hawaiian culture but has little value to modern percussionists or collectors.

A good number of the instruments mentioned above are made and sold by Robin Jackson. He will accept orders and inquiries at P.O. Box 1171, Kamuela, Hawaii 96743.

In the studio-On the road with RICK MAROTTA

Photos by Lew Citer

by Michael Rozek

Rick Marotta was born January 7, 1948 in New Rochelle, New York. And, apparently, he was also horn to play drums. For without any formal training, Marotta's natural "feel" for the instrument has made him one of the world's most in-demand session musicians. Currently, James Taylor, Carly Simon, J. D. Souther, Warren Zevon and Steely Dan rely regularly on his services for recording or touring. His playing has also helped bring hits to Roberta Flack, Linda Ronstadt, Jackson Browne, Paul Simon, Hall and Oates and Peter Dinklage. And yet, Marotta's nonchalance about all his accomplishments puts them in refreshing perspective; as he says, 'It amazes me when I get a call for 'my jazz shit' or 'that on top stuff'. What jazz shit, what stuff? I don't know what it is that makes people want to call me.'

We spoke with Marotta at his Manhattan home, just before he went on a long national tour with Ronin, the recently formed rock n' roll unit he's a fourth of (along with Waddy Wachtel, Dan Dugmore and Stanley Sheldon).

MR: Was there music in your home as you were growing up?

RM: Yeah. Both my parents were dancers, in ballroom and Latin styles, and they gave lessons for a living. In fact, I think my father, Chris Marotta, introduced the mambo into the United States, in Miami years ago. Later, when we moved to Cleveland for six years, my father and my uncle had a local TV show affiliated with the Arthur Murray studios. My sister, who's two years younger, and I would be taught different steps, as a demonstration that they could teach *anybody* to dance.

MR: Steve Gadd was a dancer, too. I wonder if there's any connection. Anyway, when did you start playing drums?

RM: After a year of college.

MR: Where did you go to school?

RM: Athens College, in Athens, Alabama. I wasn't a motivated student, but it did introduce me to psychology and sociology, which I didn't know existed for Italians. I had always thought that if you were an Italian and you were from New Rochelle, you became a garbageman, and if you were Jewish, you

became an amazing, wealthy businessman.

MR: So you didn't go back for your second year?

RM: No. I hung around Harrison and New Rochelle with (guitarist) David Spinozza and (drummer) Andy Newmark. They had their own bands, and I was the non-musician hanging out with them. Spinozza and I used to go to dance contests all the time; either he'd win or I'd win. Anyway, he kept saying he wished I played drums, so I could be in his band. Finally, his drummer got drafted for three years, and I agreed to watch his drums while he was gone. So, one day I started playing them. And, a month later, I joined David's band.

MR: What kind of band?

RM: Rhythm and Blues circa 1967-8. James Brown-type music. We were a half-white, half-black group that played for all kinds of crowds, all around Westchester. I also subbed for Newmark, and worked in a few other bands. Andy and I lived in a hotel together during this time.

MR: Did you learn a lot from Newmark?

RM: Yeah, but we were unbelievably different drummers. He was very studied, and I was self-taught.

MR: Did you learn by playing along with records?

RM: Yeah, Dino Danelli with the Rascals, Al Jackson, Bernard Purdie—all the records they played on.

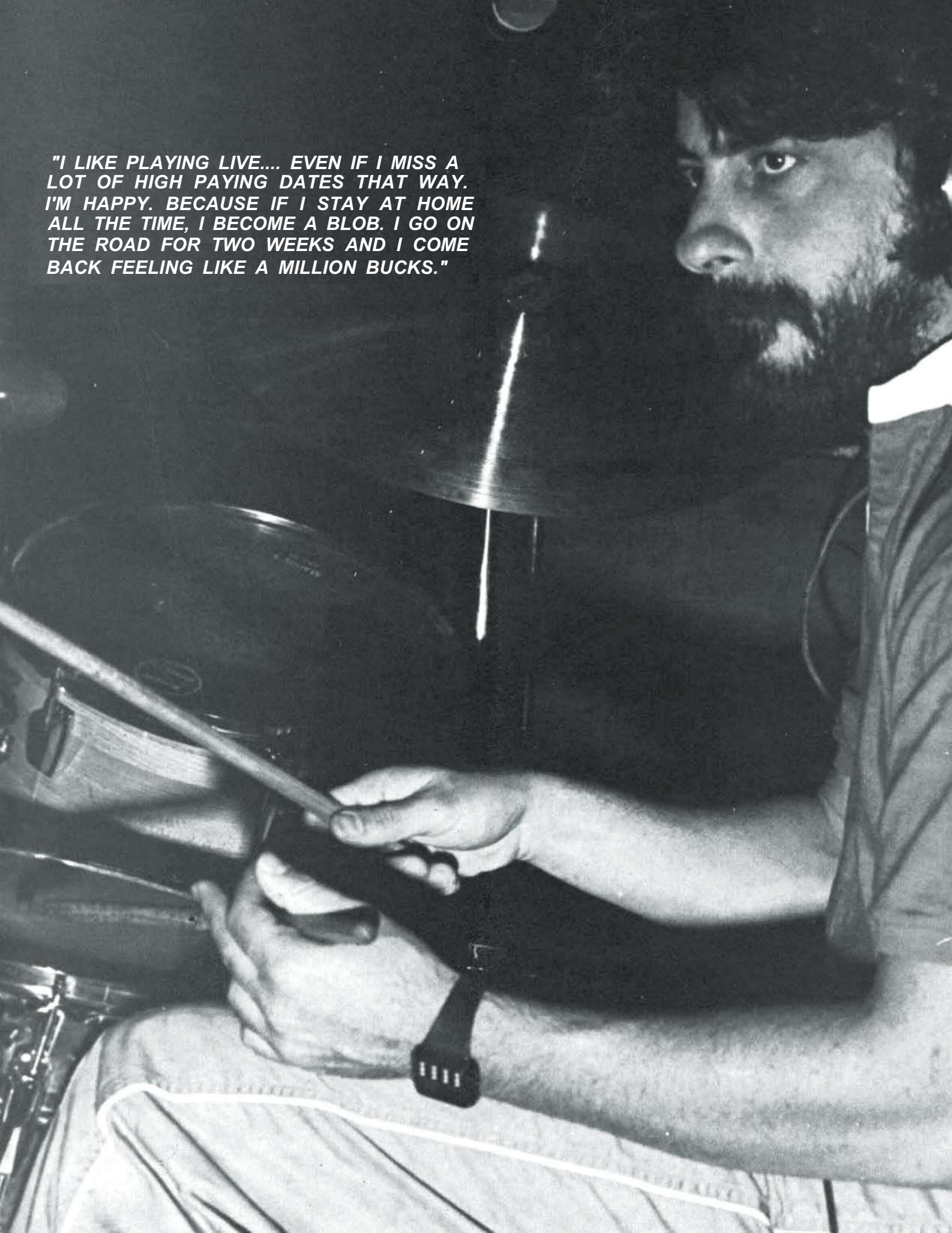
MR: But did you see this as a career? It all happened so suddenly.

RM: That's true. I just set 'em up in the room, and pretty soon I was playing. The first two weeks were unbelievably frustrating, but finally I could play the beat that Dino played, after working eight hours a day for a long time. I finally got that "boom-dit, boom boom dit," and I said to myself, "Wow!" I felt like a king. But I guess it was because I had danced so much that it finally came to me; after all, there was rhythm in me all the time.

MR: So, after those show bands, what was your next step?

RM: Well, Spinozza was only 18 or 19, but he was already doing session work; they called him "Youngblood". And because we played well together—going eight bars out and still staying right with each other, he began recommending me for his dates. Plus, he had a 10 or 12-piece band I was in, called

"I LIKE PLAYING LIVE.... EVEN IF I MISS A LOT OF HIGH PAYING DATES THAT WAY. I'M HAPPY. BECAUSE IF I STAY AT HOME ALL THE TIME, I BECOME A BLOB. I GO ON THE ROAD FOR TWO WEEKS AND I COME BACK FEELING LIKE A MILLION BUCKS."



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Soul Company. Later, we changed the name of the group to Giant, and did some sessions. But the first outside session I did was an r&b date Spinozza took me to. I was the only white guy. They had these three chick singers and everything, and I was real nervous. But I did it, and I heard it on WLIB, the soul station in New York, about two weeks later.

Eventually, David began taking me to more sessions, and he helped me learn to read. And people began calling, all by word of mouth. Suddenly, I was a "studio musician." I'd go into a date with long hair and a beard, and sit next to a guy in a suit—this was during the transition period around Woodstock, in 1969 and '70. I played my own hybrid style and could barely read a note of music, and the old-timers probably wondered if I even spoke English.

MR: I know you have a younger brother Jerry, who's also a pretty well-known drummer. During all this, was he playing, too?

RM: Yeah, I got him a set when he was thirteen, around this time. He's 24 now and has been on the road playing and recording with Peter Gabriel. Also, he works a lot with Hall and Oates. And, our youngest brother, Tommy, who's 21, is a bass player. He's on the road with Martha and the Vandellas, Little Anthony and the Imperials, and The Marvellettes.

MR: When did you buy your own drums?

RM: A group I was in in 1970, called The Riverboat Soul Band—we did one LP for Mercury—bought me my first set. I picked them out at Manny's: a psychedelic Ludwig set. I had no real preferences at that point. Later, that set was stolen by a roadie in the next band I was in, so just as well.

MR: Did you keep doing sessions at the beginning of the Seventies?

RM: Just enough to get by. Mostly, I was involved with a band called Brethren. I did a prom one night with a band from Long Island, called the Vagrants, which was (now session player) Stu Woods on bass and Tommy Cosgrove on guitar and vocals. And from that, the three of us put together this band Brethren. In 1971, we went to L. A. and did an album for Tiffany Records, which was a short-lived subsidiary of Scepter. Dr. John played keyboards on the date. The band was really something, everybody thought we were gonna make it. It was an r&b-based rock'n'roll band, the first one I'd been in without horns. Cosgrove sang like Stevie Winwood, Stu and I sang backgrounds. We went out on the road opening for every act on Chrysalis/Island at the time: Joe Cocker, Traffic. It was a *great* band. Our managers were Sid Bernstein, and later, Howard

Stein.

MR: So, what happened?

RM: Well, the first album *was* great, but poorly produced. Let's just say it was a great learning experience. But we kept touring and kicking ass. Except, the better we did musically, the more self-destructive we seemed to be offstage; they were watching (keyboardist) Mike Garson, who we'd added by now, and I, do duos, the whole set. And the crowd was *loving* it! And Stu and Tommy were urging us on! You see how crazy it was getting, like a situation comedy.

The point is, when the band broke up after the second album on Tiffany, I decided never to work for other people in this business again. I didn't care if they were going to put the Beatles back together and shoot Ringo, I wouldn't fill in. You can't rely on people, because you don't know what their parents did to them when they were growing up. And so, I went back into the studio and started working for myself.

MR: This was about 1972 or '73?

RM: Right.

MR: Did you have to cut your hair to get accepted back into the fold?

RM: I always looked different. I've never followed any of those kind of rules. Like, I wouldn't cut my hair to do the Broadway pit for "Grease." Or for on-camera jobs, either. And contractors, artists, and musicians all told me to stay in town, so I wouldn't miss calls. None of that stuff concerns me. Because, for example, I like playing live. I'll just take off and go on the road, which in those years I used to do with Roberta Flack all the time. And even if I miss a lot of high paying dates that way, I'm happy. Because if I stay at home all the time, I become a blob. I go on the road for two weeks, and I come back feeling like a million bucks. But, of course, I've mellowed with age.

MR: From 1973, it seems like everyone started using you on dates. How did it happen, exactly?

RM: I never say I'm the hottest. I never want to be number one.

MR: Okay, let's just say you needed an accountant all of a sudden. How does that sort of thing happen?

RM: In my case, it just happened right away. For some reason, I was working so much I almost burned out. But whenever I got close to that, I took off or went on the road. There was even a time when I wanted to race motorcycles, so I took two days a week and practiced that, no matter what other calls came in.

continued on page 66

Tom-Toms



by David Garibaldi

In the basic rock concept, tom-toms are traditionally used only in fills and solos. This was expanded a few years ago with the release of Marvin Gaye's "I Heard It Through The Grapevine" which used a tom-tom on beats 2 and 4 instead of the usual snare drum. Then came Al Green's records which used a similar approach, and then the "Philly Sound" of Thom Bell which utilized a tom-tom *with* the snare drum on beats 2 and 4. The classic recording of "Rock The Boat" had a drum beat that not only helped make the tune a hit, but started a trend in other records that followed. There are many more examples of this, but I believe the ones I mentioned were the ones that influenced music significantly.

Drummers like Steve Gadd, Billy Cobham, Bernard Purdie, Louis Bellson, Buddy Rich and a few others influence much of what drummers do today. There should be more men like that because music today needs the return of the innovative drummer; someone who sets the trends rather than follows them. The innovative drummer is the thinking drummer, the one who drives himself to produce results. I'd like for you to think this article through and then become inspired to develop ideas on your own; to get committed to be the best you can be and then have the energy and conviction to carry it out.

Here are a couple of ideas utilizing the toms as part of a drum beat, rather than just for fills and solos. Adding the toms give the beats a more melodic sound and can be very effective in complementing ensemble parts.



This concept substitutes T.T. for certain B.D. notes. For every B.D. note written *off the* beat, substitute a T.T. B.D. notes *on* the beat remain.



Now add B.D. on every quarter note to "lock-down" the time.

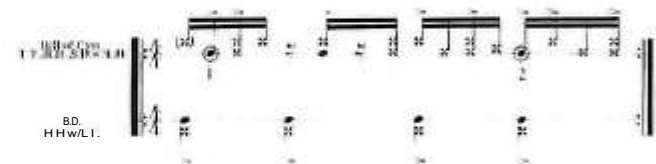


The "straight" B.D. part sets the pulse for the more syncopated hard parts.

This next idea involves the L.H. between T.T., H.H. and S.D. to produce a "Latin Rock" sound. Begin with this hand pattern:



Rearrange the sticking slightly, adding T.T. and feet:



R.H. omits the first 16th note (note in parentheses) when pattern repeats. R.H. can also be played on C.B. or 2 bell-type sounds.



L.H. moves from T.T. to H.H. to S.D., etc.

Any two T.T. can be used.

Other foot patterns can be substituted, such as the Samba foot pattern or one like this:



Remember, all unaccented S.D. are to be played softly (pp). Have fun!!

Criss: continued from page 15

would talk about Krupa for hours, because Frank knew him well. When Pearl drums first started, Frank introduced them to me. I told him I would really like to use them. Kiss was just getting started, and we had already written to all of the big drum companies to see if they would sponsor me. They wrote back things like, "We don't really know the band." But Pearl was willing to help me out. Later, when Kiss really got big, I started getting letters from all the big companies, which said, "Whatever Peter wants, Peter can have." But it was too late; I was with Pearl. Maybe I'm old-fashioned, but I'm loyal to someone who was nice to me.

RM: What was your set made from?

PC: My first custom set was made of fiberglass because that's what Pearl was into. But I like wood. I told them, "Look, I really appreciate your giving me these drums, but I'd really like to have a wooden set and I'd like to design them." And they said, "Go right ahead, Peter. It's fine with us." I designed a 16-piece set. The tom toms were longer in length than in diameter. I had 24-inch floor toms and a marching size snare drum. I had the wood covered with different-sized strips of chrome, so the set would look interesting, too. It was sort

of like having a sports car built. You don't know if its going to run as well as you think it will. Walt Johnson, the president of Pearl, said, "It's really wierd Peter. I don't know if you're going to be happy with these drums." But they turned out great. They sounded like cannons, man! It was amazing. Pearl was thrilled. They couldn't believe how well they came out. I'm having a new set made now, and they will be emerald green, like in the *Wizard of Oz*. I won't be using 16 drums anymore. I'll basically be using 3 in the front, 2 on the floor, 4 concert toms, and a thinner snare drum. I'm using less drums because I don't need to be as busy with my music as I was with Kiss. Actually, you can be just

as busy with 3 drums as you can with 16. A lot of times in the studio, I just use a basic four-piece set. On stage, I like to have more. I don't always use all of them, but if I want them, I've got them.

RM: What kind of heads do you use?

PC: I'm using regular Remo heads. I used to use black-dot, but now I've gone back to the regular Ambassadors. When they are properly tuned, they sound very snappy. I use single-headed tom toms. I like the sound.

RM: Do you use any tape or mufflers on the heads?

PC: In the studios, yeah. The drums look terrible with all of this tape, foam rubber, pillow cases, and other junk

continued on page 40

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The Care and Feeding of Drums, Part III

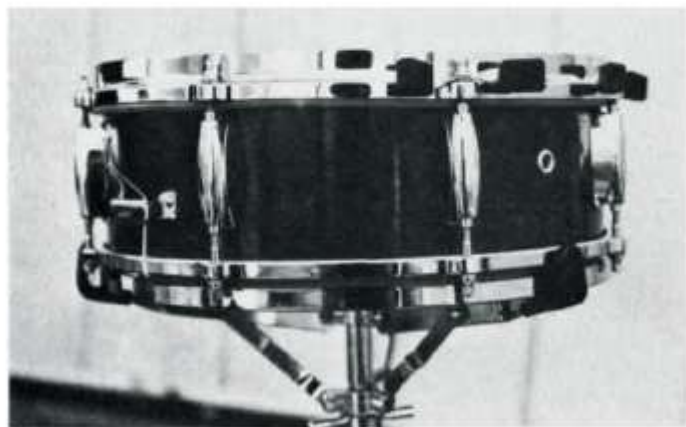
by Frank Kofsky

If the major obstacle to reworking metal snare drums is the nature of the shell material, the problem with wooden drums is of a diametrically opposed kind. Because there are so many possible modifications that can be made on a wooden shell, the difficulty is likely to be in knowing which ones to employ. But here the "forgiving" character of a wooden shell becomes a particularly great asset. Not only does a wooden drum allow one to make a wide variety of alterations, but it also means that—in *most* instances—a mistake is not necessarily fatal. An old Slingerland shell of solid maple came into my possession with a number of holes, bearing witness to the many mutations it had undergone in the course of its existence. No matter; all was put right in the end. The extraneous holes were dowed (a *dowel* is a plug, in this case wooden, used to fill an unwanted hole), other defects were corrected (by procedures I will describe below), the exterior was given a clear-lacquer finish, the bearing edges were trued (by a method outlined in the first installment in this series, see the Oct./Nov. issue of *MD*), and the drum was as good or better than new.

The point is that, although it is certainly best to proceed with caution whenever working on any musical instrument, the chances are slim that a minor error will do irreparable damage to a wooden drum shell. Bearing edges can always be made true and reveveled; undesirable holes can always be dammed with dowels; and so on. It should go without saying that before actually beginning to work on your drum, you should have located a skilled furniture-builder, cabinet-maker or other wood-working professional who has indicated his willingness to guide and assist you in your projects. If I seem to belabor this point, it is only because of the number of times I have had to be rescued when I was in over my head. When all is said and done, isn't that what experts are for?

Art of the Possible

The mahogany snare drum pictured below is a monument to the notion that a drum can be modified to meet its owner's specifications. Every aspect of this drum save its diameter has been



changed. Its depth was reduced from 6 1/2" to 5"; the original Ludwig lugs and rims were replaced with the corresponding parts from Gretsch; the pearl exterior was removed and the underlying veneer was stained and lacquered; and additional repairs and renovations, some itemized in the following paragraphs, were also carried out. This should give you some idea of how extensively a wooden shell can be altered, if one has the time, patience, money and the expert consultants to whom one can turn in a pinch. Most drums, won't require such an imposing amount of reworking; but there is no question that one or more of the steps involved in the transformation of this drum can also be employed to bring other wooden shells to their full potential. So if you have a wooden drum whose performance has never given you complete satisfaction, by all means read on—you may very well encounter the solution to your drum's maladies in so doing.

Only Skin Deep

Improving a drum's appearance is not a trivial matter, but I am going to give that subject only the briefest mention nonetheless. Why? Well, in the event you choose to repearl your wooden shell, it is likely that one of the drum stores in your area (together with your wood-working craftsman) can give you all the aid and comfort you will need. If you, as I, instead prefer a natural wood exterior for your drum, then you will certainly want to turn that portion of the proceedings over to a trained specialist. True, anyone can stain a piece of wood. But to apply the heavy lacquer coating that will protect the surface of your shell from damage demands both equipment and technique (e.g., for spraying hot lacquer) that most drummers aren't likely to have in their repertoire. The ultimate wisdom, consists of knowing what *not* to do for one's self.

Aside from the finish, you may also wish to alter the appearance of your drum by changing the lugs, snare apparatus (if present) or some other piece of hardware. This, in the majority of cases, will leave you with now-unused holes in the shell that may or may not be visible, depending on their location, whether the drum is pearled or has a lacquered-wood finish, etc. I can't speak for anyone else, but I find naked holes in drum shells rather repugnant. The *easiest* way to obliterate such eyesores is by inserting a chromed bolt (with a washer placed under the head) into each hole and securing the bolt, in the interior of the drum, with a nut, star washer and an adhesive (Loctite of the weakest grade, Threadlock, or some similar product). The *most pleasing* way to deal with these cavities, is by plugging them with wooden dowels (following the advice of your expert). But be forewarned: Even if you cut the dowels from the very same wood as that of the shell, they will ordinarily not stain to the same shade as the surrounding wood if the exterior is refinished. Admittedly, this isn't exactly a matter of cosmic significance, but if dowels whose color is different than that of the remainder of the shell are going to subvert your peace of mind, then you'd be better off using chrome bolts or even covering the surface of the shell with pearl to conceal the holes.

Inside Job

Proceeding from the exterior of the drum to the interior, note the condition of the inner wall and reinforcement rings that are present at both ends of most older shells (those made by Gretsch being the leading exception). Often, cracks will have begun to appear between the reinforcement rings and the shell wall. Such fissures can easily be filled with a fast-drying epoxy—I have had good results using Devcon "5 Minute" epoxy—that not only repairs the damage but also renders the shell harder, more durable and less prone to go out-of-round. Mix the epoxy, according to the direction of the manufacturer, on a piece of waxed paper and apply it where needed with a wooden matchstick or toothpick. Try not to leave huge globs of epoxy on the interior surfaces of the shell or reinforcement rings, as their presence may affect the tone-qualities of the drum. If large deposits do occur despite your best efforts, some of the excess may be removed with a very fine grade of sandpaper after the shell has dried, if one is careful not to take off any of the wood along with the adhesive. Epoxy on the bearing-edges of the shell and reinforcement rings will automatically be sanded away when the edges are trued and rebeveled as one of the concluding steps in the renovation of the drum.

A Sound Idea

Now that your shell has been put in excellent *mechanical* condition, it is time to consider how its *acoustic* properties might be improved. For many drummers, the ideal wooden shell speaks clearly and projects well, yet does not have excessive ring or "edge" due to overtones. There is a very simple procedure that will help give a drum a response of this type and that is especially useful when the sound of a wooden drum seems unduly "muddy" or muffled. Here is what you will need to carry it out:

- i. a can of quick-drying spray lacquer (clear, unless you wish to have the interior wall of your shell a particular color);
- ii. a set of tools that will allow you to remove and replace all the hardware on the drum;
- iii. a roll of masking tape;
- iv. an expendable cardboard box of medium size, the width or which should be *less than* the diameter of a drum (e.g., 12" wide for a 14" drum);
- v. an adhesive that will be applied to the hardware as it is being reinstalled on the shell;
- vi. two pieces of Dr. Scholl's adhesive moleskin, each 3" x 4".



Photo 1: The garbage-can lid is optional at extra cost. It's easy to spray lacquer onto the interior wall of your drum shell if you support the drum with a cardboard carton that has had one of its smaller sides removed, as illustrated here. In real life (as opposed to photojournalism), it is advisable to remove all of the hardware from the shell and place masking tape on the outside of the shell over the holes.

continued on page 50

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Reading Charts

by Mel Lewis

Over the years, I've seen too many aspiring big band drummers who simply do not take the time needed to fully develop their reading ability. Unfortunately, I've heard many competent young players become very mediocre drummers when presented with a piece of music. Remember, if your reading is not together, you'll more often than not, find yourself in a playing situation without the necessary confidence to do the job. You'll be afraid of the chart and this almost inevitably results in a drummer who gets so buried in his part that he actually stops listening to the band.

A drummer should be capable of reading as well as any other musician in the band and he must be relaxed with his part. Only in this way can he quickly absorb the framework of the arrangement and get on to the much more important business of listening to what's going on around him.

When you read a part for the first time, you should be listening as much as you're reading. The second time, you should be

listening more than you're reading. Use the third time to listen even more carefully, and by the fourth play through you shouldn't be reading at all. By the fourth time, you've certainly had sufficient time to absorb the part and get comfortable with it. Of course there are exceptions with parts which may be extraordinarily difficult or complex and which may take somewhat longer to learn. Four times, however, is the rule of thumb for the average chart. More than four is probably an indication that either you're not listening as carefully as you should, or your reading ability is not sufficiently developed to enable you to get your nose out of the chart sooner.

The transcription below is from the Thad Jones-Mel Lewis Orchestra recording of Central Park North. The first 30 bars are reproduced from *It's Time*, by Mel Lewis and Clem DeRosa by permission of Kendor Music, Inc. and D'Accord Music, Inc. Note the lead trumpet part on the upper staff and Mel's comments between.

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FILL

First system of musical notation. The upper staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lower staff is in bass clef. The system contains two measures of music, followed by a repeat sign and a measure. A box labeled 'B' is placed above the second measure. The word 'FILL' is written above the lower staff in the second measure. The word 'FILL' is also written above the lower staff in the measure following the repeat sign.

Second system of musical notation. The upper staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lower staff is in bass clef. The system contains two measures of music, followed by a measure. The word 'FILL' is written above the lower staff in the first measure.

Third system of musical notation. The upper staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lower staff is in bass clef. The system contains two measures of music, followed by a measure. The word 'FILL' is written above the lower staff in the first measure.

Fourth system of musical notation. The upper staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lower staff is in bass clef. The system contains two measures of music, followed by a measure. A box labeled 'C' is placed above the first measure. The word 'FILL' is written above the lower staff in the first measure. The word 'FILL' is also written above the lower staff in the measure following the repeat sign.

"This is a 'call & response' between trumpet and trombone figures. Support both the sections and choose equipment that matches the volume, attacks and harmonic sound of the band."

Fifth system of musical notation. The upper staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lower staff is in bass clef. The system contains two measures of music, followed by a measure. The word 'FILL' is written above the lower staff in the first measure.

Sixth system of musical notation. The upper staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lower staff is in bass clef. The system contains two measures of music, followed by a measure. The word 'FILL' is written above the lower staff in the first measure.

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Criss: continued from page 35

hanging all over them. But I'll do whatever is necessary to get a certain sound. I've really experimented. I once recorded in a bathroom. The rest of the band was down in a theater, and we had video cameras set up so we could see each other. They thought I was mad, but when we played it back, the drums sounded great.

RM: Seriously, an acoustical engineer once told me that a bathroom was an excellent acoustic chamber. He said that a lot of stages could benefit from some tile and porcelain.

PC: Maybe I wasn't as mad as I thought I was.

RM: What is your cymbal set-up?

PC: With Kiss I used 18 cymbals, from 24" down to 12". Now I'm only going to use about 6 cymbals. I use a Rock 21 ride cymbal, and I have a cymbal with rivets for crashes. All of my cymbals are Zildjian. I think they are the best. I remember when I was a kid, it took me about 8 months to save up enough money to buy my first 20" Zildjian. They are expensive, but I think they are worth it.

RM: Do you have a person who takes care of your drums?

PC: I have a roadie whose name is Chuck Elias. He has been with me 5 years. When I quit Kiss, he left with me, and now he will be my stage manager. It will be good having him there because I know my drums will always be perfect. I even bought him a set of drums, because he was so interested in learning how to tune them, in case I was ever late for a concert. When that happened, he would always have the drums tuned for me when I got there. I consider him one of the best drum roadies in the business.

RM: Do you ever use any electronic percussion?

PC: I tried to use *Syndrums* once, but I just couldn't get into them. However, I do have my own mixing board behind the drums, so I can mix my drums exactly the way I want them. I have a fiberglass wall around my drums so that the amps do not bleed into my mikes. I got that idea from the drummer in Chicago. It would be great if every drummer could have his own board, but it really costs a lot.

RM: As far as your rock drumming style, I would say that you come from the Charlie Watts school.

PC: You've hit it right on the head. Definitely Charlie Watts and Ringo Starr. I never tried to play like Ginger Baker or Keith Moon. I don't believe that a drummer should constantly play through everything. A drum is not a lead instrument. You've got your moments, like when you do a solo or when you have a specific part to play. But the drummer's real job is to keep the beat.

That's what people move their feet to. Also, when a singer is doing his lyrics, it's just rude to be banging away behind him. You should be accompanying him.

RM: Do you follow any particular guidelines when you play?

PC: I'm really careful. I don't do what I call "robot drumming," which means everything is from the book. I try to play from my heart and do things spontaneously. For instance, the "normal" way to do a fill might be to start with the snare, move to the tom tom, and then finish on the floor tom. I might start on the snare, then move to the hi-hat, then to the bell of the cymbal, and finish with a flam. So my style is to do things by feeling.

RM: Have you always practiced a lot?

PC: When I was a kid, drums played the biggest part in my life. It kept me out of gang wars, but I also had to miss a lot of baseball games. Guys would say, "C'mon and play ball!" and I'd say, "I have to practice," and they'd say, "That's stupid. Who practices drums on Saturday afternoon?" And I'd say, "I do." So I always worked hard to be a good drummer. But during the last couple of years with Kiss, my playing started getting sloppy. I was developing an "I don't care" attitude because I was so frustrated. Then the other guys start- ing getting on me, saying, "You've real-

ly got to practice more. You're getting sloppy." And I'd say, "I know that. I'm more aware of it than you are." So that was another thing that helped me realize that it was time to leave. Now I'm really working on my drumming again. I've started taking lessons from a wonderful guy named Jim Chapin. It's just like any professional. Even a tennis player takes lessons from another pro. So that's what I'm doing. I get together with Jim twice a week. When I first started with him, he put me back on the pad, and we went back to the basics, like paradiddles and flams. Now we're working on set. The interesting thing is, he's essentially teaching me jazz, but I'm showing him some rock things. It's great when you can have an exchange like that with your teacher. Jim is an amazing drummer. He could tell that I had studied with Krupa from the way I move. He tells me that I work too hard. I really sweat my brains out when I play. He wants me to concentrate on my wrists more.

RM: Do you use matched grip or traditional?

PC: I started with traditional. Ringo was the first drummer I saw play the other way. I thought, "That's not normal. You're not supposed to hold sticks that way." But I tried it, and I found that it worked better for certain rock things. So

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Tips for the Singing Drummer: Part II

by Rick Van Horn

In my last article I mentioned that a singing drummer enjoys an economic advantage in terms of the job market, and is able to contribute more to his group as a performer. I talked about developing the ability to sing while playing, through the technique of "mental independence", which is learning to play and sing automatically, with a minimum of concentration and a maximum of comfort.

Now, once you're ready to sing on-stage, in the way of equipment you'll need: 1. A microphone (and cable). 2. A stand. 3. Some way to hear what's going on (monitor). Although this sounds simple and straightforward, there are some choices to be made in each category and it's worth a little examination.

Microphones: I'm not going to endorse any brand here. The choice depends on your budget, personal preference in features, etc. I *do* recommend that you get the highest quality microphone you can afford. There's no sense working on your singing skills if your vocals are going to sound distorted due to a cheap microphone. Some other considerations are:

1. *Size and shape.* The microphone will take up some air space in front of your face. If it's very large, and especially if it's long, it will probably extend out into the area in which your sticks are moving. By the time you add a cable coming off the end, you've got a significant obstacle out there. So the smaller the mike, the better, I personally prefer the "pistol" type, which are L-shaped and hinged in the middle. The barrel is short, and the switch and cable-connection sections are

vertical, so they don't extend out into my playing space. The cable also comes off vertically.

2. *On-Off switch.* Not all mikes have them. I'd recommend that yours does so that when you're not singing you can turn it off to eliminate drum pick-up.

3. *Cables.* It's important to consider length, along with the type of P.A. system your group uses. Since drummers are generally in the rear of the stage, you might need a fairly long cable to reach from your microphone to the P.A. Twenty-five feet is about maximum for a high impedance microphone cable before you get a drop in power and fidelity. If your P.A. is high impedance (like a *Shure Vocal Master*, for example) you must buy a high impedance microphone, and use a cable no more than 25 feet long. Of course, if your group uses a low impedance system, a low impedance mike is required, and the length of cable is not really a factor.

4. *Directionality.* You'll want a very directional (unidirectional) microphone so that it picks up your voice with a minimum amount of drums. You don't want an omnidirectional mike, since it picks up everything around it for several feet.

Stands: The set-up of your kit will pretty much determine what kind of stand you need. The most traditional is the *Atlas (MS-IOC)* stand, with which we are all familiar (chrome pipe, charcoal-colored cast iron base), fitted with a boom attachment. If you have a small to medium-sized kit this generally does just fine. Some drummers add flexibility by

attaching a "gooseneck" extension to the boom. This way they can keep the stand behind and above them, and just drop the mike right down where they need it. An extra counterweight on the other end of the boom is generally required.

I have a large set, and I'm pretty much surrounded by cymbals. I don't really have a place to bring a boom across at head level. And because I generally set up against a back wall, I don't have the space to put a stand behind me. I want as little air space as possible taken up by a microphone and stand, so I use an old *Atlas (SB-36)* studio boom. It's a monster, but it sits well outside my set, goes up about eight feet in the air, and swings a five-foot boom over to a position above my head. I then attach a 19" gooseneck straight down from the end of the boom, and use a *Shure (545-S)* pistol mike mounted upside down on the gooseneck. The whole assembly gives me a microphone virtually on a skyhook, and with the cable going back up along the gooseneck and across the boom, I have very little interference with my playing.

Monitors: Hearing yourself sing is the key to correct pitch, harmony, blending and expression. And once again, due to stage positioning, the drummer is generally the farthest away from the traditional type of floor monitors. If your group has its own monitor speakers, be sure to position one so that you can hear it clearly.

Even better, jump on the bandwagon for personal monitors. Music stores have recently been featuring a variety of

small, powerful speaker units designed to be used in tight places, mounted on mike stands for the purpose of personal monitors. My group's lead vocalist uses a "Hot Spot," which is about the size of the average lunch box, and hooks directly into the monitor system speaker line, requiring no additional amplifier of its own. The advantages of a unit of this type include small size, flexibility of positioning, and proximity to your ears. Disadvantages include no individual volume or tone controls, and a tendency to distort at very high volume. However, due to the closeness at which they can be used, you shouldn't have to run at distortion level volume.

I took the personal monitor one step further. Because I sing lead a great deal, I wanted to be able to control my monitor volume independently. Because my monitor is often in a less than optimum position in relation to some of the microphones on stage, I wanted to control tone independently so as to prevent feedback. My solution was a small, self-contained guitar amplifier and speaker unit, which I could control myself. I took a line from the "tape out" jack on the rear of our *Shure Vocal Master P.A.* amp. I put it through a potentiometer (volume control) to lower the signal voltage to a level correct for a guitar amp. Then I ran it into a *MXR* 6-band equalizer, which gives me all the frequency control I need to prevent feedback. From the EQ I took the line into the amp, and there I have additional volume and tone controls. In all, I spent about \$150.00 (the amp was used) which seems high for a monitor-but I always have just what I need, no matter where we play or what type of monitor system is provided. I can adjust my monitor volume up or down as the band's volume varies, and I can adapt the frequencies from night to night as the climate and number of people in the room changes.

I've found that a careful selection of equipment and some forethought about its application makes my job as a singing drummer much easier, more effective, and more enjoyable.

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FREEPORT MUSIC

Teachers: Studying And Learning

by Roy Burns

There are many opinions and points of view (pro and con) about studying with a private drum teacher. Drummers who have never taken a lesson frequently criticize drum teachers. Drum teachers criticize each other, sometimes privately, sometimes publicly. Young drummers may feel that learning to read music is not important. Some college music teachers feel that drum teachers emphasize rudiments and technique without teaching the student enough about music. Famous professional drummers occasionally are critical of private drum teachers. The argument goes on and on, year after year.

What's amazing is that new young drummers of great ability keep bursting onto the professional scene with widely varied backgrounds. Some really great players can't read. Others have amassed a tremendous knowledge of music and drumming. Some have never really taken drum lessons on a regular basis. Others have years of intense, disciplined study behind them.

Although their backgrounds are different, I have felt for years that all accomplished players must have some special quality in common. That special quality is the ability to teach themselves, or to learn on their own, how and what they want to play. This is not to suggest that training is not helpful. It is just that a good teacher can only do so much for the student. Unfortunately, he cannot inject the student with ability, talent or desire.

No teacher can teach anyone how to play. This must be learned through experience and a lot of playing.

However, let's not underestimate the great value of a good teacher. He can help the student in many ways. The teacher *can* accomplish the following if the student is willing.

1. Help the student develop good technique.
2. Help the student learn to read music.
3. Help the student learn to listen (ear training).
4. Help the student prepare for contests, auditions and work situations.
5. Provide encouragement and support.

6. Offer criticism and re-evaluation when the student begins to overestimate his accomplishments, or begins to think he is really hot stuff.
7. Suggest players for the student to listen to that otherwise might be overlooked.
8. Help the student develop an awareness and understanding of different styles.
9. Discuss the student's problems in confidence. Some of the best lessons are of this type.
10. Help the student learn the fundamentals of music as well as drumming.

By sharing his knowledge and experience, the teacher can save the student valuable time by avoiding the trial and error method. Why then did I say that no teacher can teach anyone "how to play"?

My good friend Paul Kush who teaches young drummers in California tells his students the following: "Fifty percent of what you need can be developed and learned by studying and practicing. The other fifty percent must be learned *on your own by getting out and playing with other musicians.*"

I believe this to be fundamentally true based on my own experience. Sonny Iggoe, a prominent teacher in New York City helped me in much the same way.

A number of years after our first meeting I was living in New York and I heard that Sonny was teaching. I made an appointment to take a lesson. Sonny watched me play for a few minutes and startled me by saying, "You don't need anymore lessons. You just need to go out and play." He recommended me for Woody Herman's Band. I made the audition, got the job, and was on my way.

My first professional teacher was a man named Jack Miller from Kansas City. He taught me to "Develop control first and speed will follow." He also taught me to beware of overly complicated explanations of technical methods. "Keep it simple, and practice." Good advice. Jack also spent many hours working with me long after the regular lesson was finished. I'll never forget it.

My first teacher in New York City was Jim Chapin. He recommended me for my first job in New York, encouraged me,

and at the same time challenged and stimulated me musically.

He taught me how to use my arms and how to play in a more relaxed manner. There was always a feeling of exchange between us. It was almost as if we were studying together. It was a great experience and I learned a great deal.

Henry Adler helped me to develop a more precise grip which helped my endurance. The wrist exercises that I've demonstrated on countless clinics I learned from Henry. He also encouraged me to keep writing. His advice on the music business proved to be invaluable. I learned many things from Henry that helped my career.

Drum teachers come in all shapes, sizes and levels of expertise. Some, admittedly, are better than others. It is my personal belief that the great percentage are sincere in their efforts to help young players.

The fundamentals of music and the fundamentals of drumming are the same for everyone. A teacher need not be a genius level player to transmit an understanding of fundamentals to a young person. As a matter of fact, some great players do not make great teachers. Very often they lack the patience required to teach effectively. I was quite fortunate to study with people who were top professional players with the ability to articulate their experience. This is the type of teacher that can help the advanced student make the transition to working professional.

Ideally, teaching should be a creative experience for both teacher and student. By this I mean that really good teachers are constantly learning from the experience, as well as the student.

One of the problems encountered by the more advanced student is that he has developed certain habits and certain ways of doing things by the time he gets to a top professional teacher, music school or college. Jim Petercsak who teaches percussion at Potsdam University in New York, has developed a sensitive and intelligent way of dealing with this situation. Jim says, "I never try to change a student's technique or force him to play in a different way. I just add to what he already has. It is easier to form new habits than it is to break old ones."

continued on following page

Bob McKee, a good friend who teaches in Cleveland, Ohio, feels that the toughest challenge for a teacher is to prepare the student to play well in different styles. He has a good point. It can often be the difference between working and not working, especially for a young drummer.

To play in different styles requires an understanding of the music to be played. This is more than just learning "beats". Bob has managed to help his students learn to cope with different styles and different musical situations. Many of his students are now working in demanding and good paying professional bands. Here's a few guidelines on choosing a teacher which might be helpful:

1) Try to set up an interview with the teacher or talk with some of his students. This will give you some idea of what the teacher specializes in and what you can expect to learn. Not every teacher can offer what you are most interested in. It will depend to some degree on the teacher's experience in music and what he feels is important to emphasize with students.

2) Avoid teachers who spend a lot of time criticizing name drummers or other teachers. Everyone has opinions but defensive ego building at the expense of the student's valuable time is *not* a necessary part of the teaching process. It indicates insecurity on the part of the teacher.

3) Avoid any teacher who consistently plays more during the lesson than the student. There may be times when this is necessary to make a point, but it should be the exception and not a regular occurrence.

4) Avoid teachers who spend a great deal of time explaining "weird" or "far out" theories that have little or no practical application. Conversations and explanations are needed to be sure, but if too much time is spent philosophizing the teacher may just be impressing himself.

The best teachers stress the fundamentals of music and drumming. They strive to help the student develop the tools and knowledge he will need in order to develop his own style. By sharing their experience they can save a young drummer lots of time by avoiding obvious pitfalls and bad habits.

The most important person in the learning process is the student. In the final analysis, each one of us determines to a great degree how much we will learn. Attitude, desire, willingness to work coupled with natural ability are the key ingredients for learning. Your most important tools are your mind, your ears, and the drive to succeed.

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So You Want to Write a Drum Book?

by Rich Baccaro

You say you want to write a drum book? Interesting. I wrote a drum book, and in the process learned quite a bit more than how to write a drum book. Writing a book is an exercise in *self*. More specifically, getting to know one's own *self*. Let's face it, a book on any subject is the writer's personal opinion of a situation. Writing a book is an exercise in self-confidence, self-determination, and self-control.

Being a teacher, and being aware of certain deficiencies in my students' playing, I decided to write the book that would mystically transform deficiency into flawlessly sparkling proficiency and turn me into an overnight international celebrity. Fortunately, before I ordered that Mercedes, I regained communication with reality and realized that writing a book would be a serious, long-range project requiring hours of plain old hard work. Laughing egotistically into the face of my old enemy, the work ethic, I began my endeavor with confidence.

The initial phase of the project was a time for experimentation, pencilling ideas, practicing them and trying them with some of my students. This is when the fledgling book writer learns that experimentation is the mother of revision. What else could I do? I experimented. I revised.

Suddenly, probably through some type of higher intervention, I knew what I wanted. I visualized the book's format. I pictured a book bearing my name resting comfortably within the shelves of the world's leading music emporiums. Fun and profit. The thought of my name in print in a place other than the phone book inspired the official writing to commence. I wrote recklessly and involuntarily, wherever, whenever and whatever. Notes were doodled on anything that would accept pencil lead. Scrap paper, napkins, my socks—anything. (I strongly suggest *not* writing while driving, as it is quite dangerous and against the law in most states, possible exceptions being Indiana and California).

Realizing that a reputable publisher would probably never accept a manuscript written on a sock, or a Dairy Queen napkin, I felt that some type of

organization in my writing was in order.

Organization was simple. One blank manuscript book, a pencil, four dozen erasers, and a rail-car load of coffee. Coffee is vitally important. Philosophically speaking, a writer should be awake while writing, for best results. Furthermore, a few strategically placed coffee stains on the finished manuscript gives a book that earthy, human quality which publishers are so fond of. My new-found organization in turn, organized my thoughts. And my thoughts became realistic questions, such as "Has anyone ever written this before?"

Would-be writers must know what is already in print. If one's subject has already been represented, leaving insufficient space for honest improvement or simplification, the project should be junked. Self-realization. Publishers, justifiably want to make a profit, and are only interested in books with sales potential. Recycled versions of the old standards don't sell, and are usually inferior imitations.

Considerable time now had to be spent browsing through countless available publications. This was time well spent though, as I learned the essence of fear; fearing what contents lie behind each new cover; fearing my reaction to finding a book covering my subject. I pictured myself finding a book identical to mine, weeping and screaming until I had to be sent away for a long rest. My searching and browsing was an education in itself as I was able to see music publication on a much larger scale. Not only did I see excellence, I saw stupidity, and varying levels of proficiency in-between. I also came across some publications which verged dangerously on musical pornography. Finally satisfied that my idea for a book was valid and original, I proceeded.

I was becoming the drummers' Thoreau. My dining room, Walden. And the table therein, my cabin. This is where I discovered previously undiscovered strengths and perceptions. Long hours of writing produced semi-cosmic thoughts on the mystery of music. At this point, I considered calling my book: *Zen and the Art of Improvisational Tranquility for Drummers* (Volume I). Bewil-

dered and stoned on coffee, I would gaze at the partially-completed manuscript, much the same as John Jerome would stare at his disassembled 1950 Dodge pickup in his book *Truck*. There would be scrawled on a page, a jumbled series of little beads, with various stems and flags growing out of them. Notes. These so-called notes would be segregated into clusters by rigid vertical lines called bars. Things called codas, signs, rests and other funny looking representations supposedly gave rational meaning to the whole mess. *Rational Meaning? Sense?* This is when I discovered that I was not writing music. I was, in my own way, attempting to symbolize the undefineable. I was actually trying to draw pictures of noise! Wow! Try explaining that one to a 13 year old drum student whose only ambition in life is to be second-string right fielder for the Chicago Cubs. These moments of departure eventually convinced me that I was drinking entirely too much coffee. At any moment, I expected Robert Young to stroll in wearing a striped tie and plaid jacket advising me that I should be drinking Sanka. Believe me, this is definitely not the time to even *consider* quitting smoking.

One of the most difficult hurdles for a writer is to try to draw pictures of noise while there is louder noise blasting from a nearby television set, professing the virtue of the various goods and services being advertised thereon. I would often find myself writing the rhythmic patterns of these jingles or worse than that, spontaneously singing and dancing "Armed with Ajax" all over the dining room table. On the very worst of these bad days, I began simultaneously saying the dialogue of a "Leave it to Beaver" rerun.

My manuscript and I were both beginning to look like Jerome's pickup truck. But there is some measure of virtue in all situations; a calming philosophy evolved from the "bad days": *Put your tools away, get a beer, try writing again tomorrow*. Self-Preservation. This is a very important point to remember.

Finally, the pencil copy was complete. All that was left to do was polish it, copy it over in felt-tip pen, get it published and

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Criss: *continued from page 41*

now I play both ways. Traditional is better for jazz things, and with my music I use it a lot, but with Kiss, I always played the other way. We were so loud, that was the only way I could be heard.

RM: Now that you are studying jazz with Chapin, do you think you might do some jazz tunes?

PC: I might mix some jazz in my music, sure. I've always loved jazz, but I could not do any with Kiss. Now I can. On the album, a tune called "Where Will They Run" has a sax solo which is more of a jazz break than a rock break.

RM: Do you ever use brushes anymore?

PC: In my early days, I played a lot of clubs, and I worked the Catskills a lot. I used brushes then, and I used them on the Chelsea album. But I never used them with Kiss, and it's been so long, that I would probably sound like a real klutz if I tried to play with them now. But I think I will start using them again. They have such a good sound.

RM: Will you be doing any clinics for Pearl?

PC: I will if they ask me. Drum clinics are really great. I'm glad they started doing them. I respect Pearl highly, and I owe them a lot. So I would go out and play for them anytime. I recently told them that my wife is going to have a baby, which I'm thrilled about, and so Pearl is going to build a miniature set of drums for me to give to my kid. They are really a great company.

RM: What about private teaching?

PC: I don't have the time or the patience. I envy teachers, because they've got a hard job. I don't know how Jim puts up with me. I wouldn't have his patience. If my son wants to be a drummer, I'll get him a teacher. I don't think I'll teach him, but I'll be an observer. I'll be the hardest critic he has.

RM: You'll probably tell him what your father told you: "You'll never be as good as Krupa."

PC: I probably will, but it pays to be that firm. It makes you determined.

RM: Your music seems to have a variety of influences. What do you listen to?

PC: I listen to big band music, believe it or not. I've got old albums by Glenn Miller, Tommy Dorsey, Jimmy Dorsey, even Bix Biederbeck and Chick Webb. Of course, I've got all of Gene's albums, and a lot of Benny Goodman. I grew up on that music. My dad was a ballroom dancer and that's the music we had around the house. I also listen to people like Billy Joel, Bruce Springsteen, Bob Seger, and the Stones. I really like Frank Sinatra. That guy has been singing a long time, and he can still make 16 year old girls cry. I really respect him and I would like to meet him. I've seen him perform

continued on page 53



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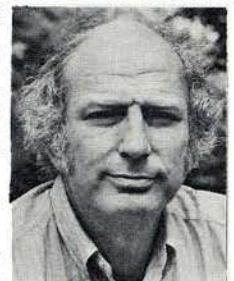
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Shop Talk: continued from page 37

And here are the steps to be followed:

1. Remove all hardware from the drum.
2. Place masking tape on the *outside* of the shell over all holes. If you have already trued and rebeveled the bearing edges of the drum, cover these with masking tape as well.

3. Cut off one end of the cardboard box and place the shell on top of it, as shown in the accompanying photograph.

4. Spray the drum from the interior by running your arm through the open end of the box and under the edge of the shell. It is preferable to apply several thin coats, allowing each one to dry (a matter of a few minutes at most, if you have selected your lacquer judiciously) before adding the next. (A thick layer of lacquer may not dry thoroughly, remaining soft and tacky instead, which tends to defeat the purpose of using it in the first place.) Two or three such coats ordinarily suffice, unless the wood of the shell is unusually absorbent (as happens sometimes when an older shell has dried out) and/or the sound of the drum is extremely murky.

5. To be on the safe side, let the drum stand overnight in a warm, dry place, such as a garage, then remove the masking tape and reattach the hardware, making liberal use of the adhesive.

6. If you haven't done so already, true and rebevel each bearing edge, following the directions given in Part I of this series. Replace the heads and rims, tune the heads, play on the drum for one week (or longer if the heads are brand new), then evaluate its response.

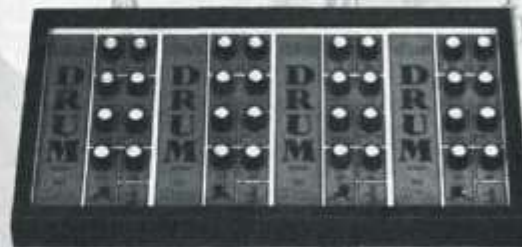
If (a) the drum still sounds gutless or mushy, return to step 1, above, and again carry out the entire sequence of operations up to and including this step.

If (b) the response of the drum is completely satisfactory to you, give three cheers and indulge yourself in a celebration in a manner of your own devising.

If (c) you now find the drum a shade too overbearing for your taste—if it tends to ring harshly or excessively when the batter

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head is struck forcefully—remove one of the heads and affix the two pieces of Dr. Scholl's moleskin to the interior shell wall. These pieces should be positioned directly across from each other—that is, 180° apart—and, if possible, should come into direct contact with the shell at every point on their surface; they should not cover any of the interior mounting parts of the drum hardware if there is any way of avoiding it. Used in this fashion, the moleskin allows you to dispense with an internal tone control, a procedure for the removal of which was presented in the preceding article. After the moleskin has been inserted, one of three conditions must obtain:

(c-1) The shell surpasses your wildest dreams, in which case re-read step (b); or

(c-2) The moleskin has caused the drum to be too "dead," in which case you should replace each 3" x 4" piece of moleskin with a fresh piece one half that size (that is, 3" x 2"), then repeat step (c) until you achieve the desired results; or

(c-3) The drum is *still* brighter or livelier than you would like it—a theoretical possibility, but one I have never encountered in practice—in which case, continue onward to step (d).

(d) You have your choice of two avenues that you can explore, either singly or in combination: (i) Experiment with more moleskin, adding one-half of a piece at a time to each side of the drum. (ii) Attempt to remove some of the lacquer with a very fine grade of sandpaper. As I have already remarked, however, unless you have sprayed the lacquer on your shell with a fire hose, it is most unlikely that a wooden drum would ever require measures of such a drastic nature. The rule of thumb that has yet to fail me is that a few light coats of lacquer and two pieces of moleskin right out of the package will turn the trick every time.

The one instance I have discovered in which the use of moleskin creates more problems than it solves is when it is attached to the interior shell wall of an antique brass snare drum as a means of absorbing some of the higher frequencies. The reason,

continued on page 90

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Peter Magadini holds degrees from the San Francisco Conservatory and the University of Toronto and has earned numerous honors and awards from his private studies and participation in seminars.

Peter has taught at the Los Angeles Professional Drum Shop, the Lake Tahoe Concord Summer Music Camp and the San Francisco Conservatory of Music.

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Criss: continued from page 47

an enormous number of times.

RM: Now that you've been away from Kiss for awhile, what are your feelings about the group?

PC: The most positive thing is that I was in the greatest rock group in the world. We probably put on the greatest show on earth. No band has ever sold as much merchandise as Kiss. And I love all of that stuff. When I go to rehearsal, I take my lunch in my own Kiss lunch box. And I love being in Marvel Comics. I grew up reading Marvel Comics and now someday my kids can read about me in Marvel. I can hear them now, "Wow, Daddy, can you really shoot laser beams out of your eyes?" From being in Kiss, I have at least 50 gold records and 35 platinum. I still sit around this table with the other guys and we still share everything. So, for the good part of Kiss, I thank God I was in it.

RM: Have you met the new Kiss drummer, Eric Carr?

PC: Yeah. He's a great kid. I like him. I told him, "If you ever want to call me for anything, I'll be glad to help you out." I imagine the other three are ribbing him a lot because he's new. If he ever needs to know how to get back at those guys, I can give him all the great tricks in the world.

RM: So now "The Cat" is starting his second life?

PC: No, I'm probably on my ninth. I feel like I've already been through eight. This might be my last one. So that's why I want to be Peter Criss.

RM: Do you think you will be able to have as much success on your own as you had with Kiss?

PC: I think if I hang in there as hard as I hung in with Kiss, and if I believe in myself as much as I believed in Kiss, I'm going to make it. You have to believe in yourself. An audience knows when you are faking. You can't go out there and be insecure, because they will pick up on that and destroy you. But if you gain confidence in yourself, then everybody else will have confidence in you. I remember talking to Dianna Ross about it. I said, "When you quit the Supremes and went out on your own, did you have any doubts?" And she said, "Everybody has doubts, but you have to follow your heart. If you think you can do it, then do it, because you don't want to sit around someday and ask yourself if you could have made it." So that's why I'm going on my own. I don't ever want to ask myself that question. I want to do it now, while I've still got the chance.

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Sonor XK925



by Bob Saydlowski, Jr.

I recently visited Sonor's distributor depot here in the States—Charles Alden Music in Walpole, Massachusetts—and was able to test their XK925 5-piece kit.

All *Sonorphonic* shells are made of 9-ply beechwood with staggered seams. Most other shells are made from a flat piece of wood steamed and rolled into a circle and then glued together. There is a weak spot where the two ends meet to form a seam. Sonor's shell is constructed ply by ply from the outside in. The glueing is done with an oil-heated press. Each inner joint is staggered, thereby strengthening the shell with no need for reinforcing rings. The result is a fully vibrating shell with a 45° bevel on both ends (except on concert toms, where the bottoms are finished flat). After being covered in plastic, the shells are almost half an inch thick. The drums use a "floating head" principle much like a tympani, where the shell is made just a bit undersize relative to the head and counterhoop. The only head contact point is at the bearing edge. This allows for easier and finer tuning.

The XK925 components are: 14" x 22" bass drum, 16" x 16" floor tom, 9" x 13" and 10" x 14" mounted toms, and a 5 3/4" x 14" steel snare drum.

The 22" bass has 20 lugs fitted with T-handle style tensioners and pressed steel claws. Both metal hoops have a plastic insert at their bottom for pedal clamping. Spurs are made from a thick rod, shaped into a curved triangle. The triangle tip is angled towards the front of the drum to prevent unnecessary "creep" of the bass drum. The entire spur is connected to a prism clamp on the bass drum, locking in place with a T-screw. The tip of each spur has a threaded rubber tip with an exposable spike tip. When packing the drum, the spurs fold flush against the shell following the natural curve of the drum. The drum is fitted with a felt strip

underneath each head. Sonor also has an adjustable internal damper for their bass drums available on their Rosewood kits. However, the internal damper may be purchased separately for about \$60, but has to be installed by the user. One thing that upsets me about this Sonor bass drum is that the venthole and badge are located at the *bottom* of the drum. I was told that Sonor feels their new tom-tom holder plate took up enough space on the drum, and drilling another hole nearby would weaken the shell. From a structural point of view, it does make sense. I played the drum single-headed with a CS batter and found it to have more than ample volume and good tone. A blanket inside would make it punch a little better. Adding a transparent *Ambassador* front head gave it a little more tonal depth. The drum comes stock with coated *Ambassador's* but other heads are available as options at a very small additional cost.

The 13" and 14" mounted toms have 12 and 16 lugs respectively. The 16" x 16" floor tom has 16. All drums have seamless triple-flanged hoops. Sonor lugs are foam-padded and accept their slotted tension rods (turned with a Sonor key or a quarter). Threads are cut into the rods, instead of being pressed. All Sonor drums, except bass drums, are now equipped with *Snap-Lock*—a counterlock device. A "D"-shaped wire spring is inserted through a slot in each lug insert. The tension rods have flattened threads on two sides. When the rod is turned with a flat edge showing outward, the spring's flat side clamps it, locking the rod in place. Hard rock drummers will love these, because under heavy playing, de-tuning of the tension rods cannot cause a problem anymore. However, I found it time-consuming to change heads with these *Snap-Locks* fitted, as every time the rod is turned to a

flat, it locks to the spring. It takes a while to bypass all the thread lockstops and remove the rod. Sonor has incorporated a great idea for the mounted drums. Each tom has two ventholes and badges located opposite each other. Besides dispersing air quicker, a Sonor badge will always face the audience no matter which way the toms are set up. Their large black-and-silver rectangular badge is silkscreened with the Sonor logo and shell type.

Sonor has also totally remodeled their tom-tom holder, a massive cast block through which a single 29mm tube passes. There is a recess in this block for a memory height clamp on the tube to fit into. Beneath the block is a strengthening plate with a pipe cast into it to keep the height tube steadied. The tube is locked into place by a T-screw pressing against a wedge in the plate, in turn, pressing against the tube thus securing height position. At the top of the tube is a large two-piece prism plate with two openings to accept the holder arms. The arms are locked into position by faucet-type lever handles turning sprung locking nuts. The levers can be moved out of each other's way by being pressed in and turned, defeating the spring, somewhat like a torque wrench. The tom-tom arms are basically the same as Sonor's previous ones. A spring-loaded ratchet tube passes through the tom-tom, again clamped tight via an angled T-screw and wedge in the tom-tom plate. I am amazed that Sonor didn't fit "memory clamps" to the holder arms as they did with the bottom holder tube. They'd be a sure advantage. The holder works well, and looks quite impressive. It works well for wide-spread tom setups, and is also comfortable enough to position close together. I was assured by the Alden people that they've never had a problem with the bass drum shell buckling under the weight of the holder and tom-toms,

continued on following page

which causes ovaling particularly if the front head is left off. If you like the single-head sound, I would recommend cutting a hole in the front head, or removing the head and installing hoop spacers to keep the rods and counterhoop on the front of the drum.

The floor tom has three angled legs which fit into prism clamp blocks. It's a mystery to me why, having regular rubber feet, the floor tom's legs are the only pieces of Sonor hardware that do not have the adjustable locking rubber/spike tips.

The internal mufflers on the drums have a thick 2 1/2" felt pad and work smoothly. Sonor also makes external dampers similar to the Rogers *Super-X* which clip to the drum rim and adjust with a wing bolt. The three toms come stock with Remo coated *Ambassador* heads. The drums do sound very alive with the *Ambassadors*, especially when tuned high. A *CS* or *PinStripe* would sound great for low-tuned rock playing.

The *D505* snare drum is made of ferromagnesian steel in a 10-lug seamless shell. The drum is plated in three steps, copper, nickel, and finally a bright, heavy chrome finish. The edges of the drum have a 45° flange like all other Sonor drums, and a center reinforcing bead. All of Sonor's snare drums are drawn out of the center of one piece of metal in one operation by a projecting machine. The strainer is of the side-throw type, adjustable for tension at both ends, stretching the snares evenly like in a parallel snare system. It works efficiently, without a lot of little adjustments like most parallel snare drums. The drum comes with 22-strand cord-attached snares and is supplied with *Diplomat* heads. The drum leaves the factory tuned with a stroboscope. I found it to have a crisp, alive sound, right out of the box. It's very responsive (thanks to the thin heads), and has enough volume to probably fill a 20,000-seat hall. The price is competitive with other drums, and for the money, it's one of the best going.

The two *Z5232* cymbal stands have wide-spread single braced tripod legs with rubber/spike tips. Each section is gripped by an indirect-pressured clamp. The tilter is spring-loaded and works on a ratchet system. The entire tilter assembly is removable from the top tube in a separate piece. Sonor also makes double-braced stands with an *extremely* wide stance, as well as a stand with *two* boom arms to hold two cymbals.

The snare stand also has a tripod base, but folds from the bottom. Angle adjustment is locked with a giant wing screw. The stand uses the "basket" principle. Sonor's unique method of gripping the drum is via a lever that raises the basket arms up to clamp the snare secure. At

the end of Sonor's basket shaft is a knurled knob that sets up the width of the basket the first time. After that, the drum is "quick-released" and "quick-clamped" with the lever. Once you learn how to set it up, it works very nicely.

The *Z5456* hi-hat stand has a two-piece footboard covered in rubber which connects to the internal rod via a metal strap. The top pull rod is hexagonal. The cymbal cannot twist or turn when the hi-hat clutch, with its hex hole, is mated on the pull rod. The clutch screw presses against a flat surface rather than a curved one. The tripod legs have the adjustable tips. Tension is not adjustable. It had a somewhat "tight" feel on first try, but Sonor thoughtfully includes two extra springs of different tensions to meet different players' needs. The bass drum pedal is the *Z5317* reviewed in my *Product Close-Up*, (MD: Oct/Nov-1980). If you missed it, here's a capsule description. The *Z5317* is of the single expansion spring type with a two-piece pressed footboard inset with ribbed rubber and a removable toe stop. The beater is conical shaped, hard felt. Linkage is a thick strap made of industrial fiber. The pedal clamps to the drum hoop using an angled T-screw halfway down its left side, screwing down a sprung metal plate. Stroke and footboard angle are both adjustable. Three extra springs are

included for varied tensions. The *Z5317* is an efficient pedal and is beautifully designed.

The kit I saw was in Metallic Silver, but it's also available in Metallic Copper, Bronze Pewter, Ruby, Blue, Gloss White, or Black for \$2,372.00. Other finishes are available at different price levels: oak or mahogany veneer for \$2500, outside rosewood veneer for \$2742, or genuine rosewood veneer, inside and out, for \$2970. The Metallic Silver looks good. Covering seams are hidden from the audience view, and I imagine under stage lights, it would look majestic.

While at the Sonor depot, I saw a well-stocked parts department. Service should be no problem. Waiting for a bass drum spur to come from Germany could take a while, but Alden has all the needed parts, ready to be shipped in the U.S. or Canada.

The *XK925* is a well-built kit. The 9-ply shells are flawless, and make for a heavy drum. The chrome looks good, and the hardware is strong. With today's price levels, this kit in Metallic or Gloss, is really not much more expensive than other kits. Now if you really want to spend some dollars, check out Sonor's recently-released *Signature Series* 12-ply exotic wood shells in an 8-drum kit with hardware—for \$6885.

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by Bob Saydlowski, Jr.

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	903BST	boom(1)	tripod	double	drum	2	\$ 93.00
	803	straight	tripod	single	drum	2	\$ 55.00
	803BS	boom	tripod	single	drum	2	\$ 72.00
	803BD	boom	tripod	double	drum	2	\$ 86.00
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	CS-902	boom	tripod	double	ratchet	2	\$ 90.00
	CS-901	straight	tripod	double	ratchet	2	\$ 70.00
	CS-702	boom	tripod	single	ratchet	2	\$ 70.00
SONOR	CS-701	straight	tripod	single	ratchet	2	\$ 55.00
	Z5232*	straight	tripod	single	ratchet	2	\$ 85.00
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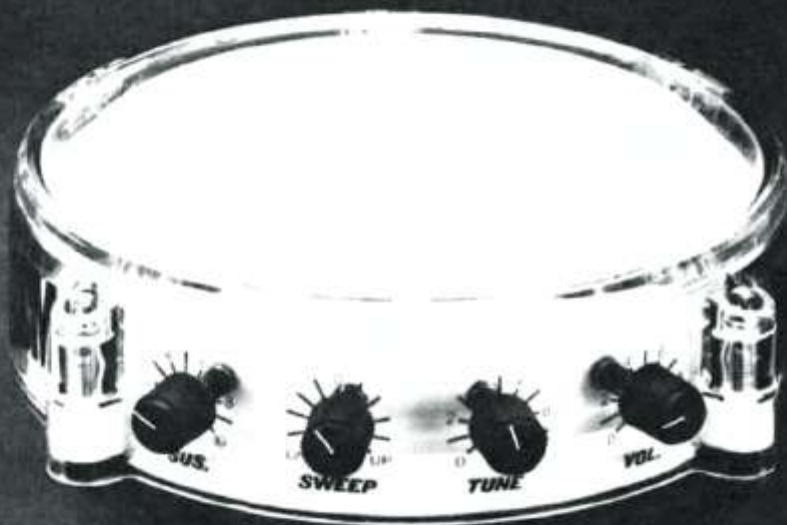
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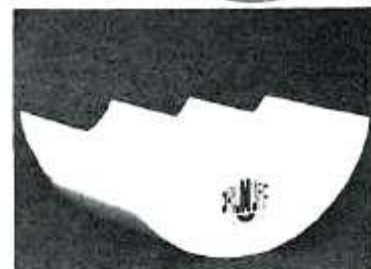
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Morgenstein: *continued from page 26*

mouth open. And by the end of the night, I guess it was 1 or 2 in the morning, I went home, took out my sticks and started practicing the figures that I particularly enjoyed that he played. It's nice to be able to watch a drummer and figure out what he's doing with his four limbs to be able to analyze it and catalog it for future reference.

RT: Ken Scott produced two of the Dixie Dregs' albums. What effect, if any, did he have on your playing?

RM: First off, he told me I played too much. He's approaching the music from a recording standpoint, not from a live show at all. And he maintains the difference between the two. With recording, it turns out the less you play an instrument, the more pure and beautiful it's going to sound through a system. And in the case of a band, you're dealing with the drums and all the layers of things that are going to go on it. So there's going to be a lot happening. For one, the more notes you play, or the faster you play, the less volume you're going to have, naturally. When you just hit one note on the drum you can really whop it, but if you're playing fast as hell you're not going to be having the same impact that you have with the one note. It's his theory that the harder you hit a drum, the better the sound for the drum. And I really like the sound that Ken got on my drums. So we'd play a song, and he'd say, "That section there, simplify it." And I'd simplify it, and he'd say, "Simplify it some more." And I didn't like that at first. It's intimidating when you have a stranger there telling you what to do, but in the end it really worked out. I know what he meant. And since, I think I've probably overcompensated a little bit too much by simplifying things more than they really needed to be. But Ken Scott did a lot of recordings with McLaughlin with the Mahavishnu Orchestra, who had the most profound effect on me of any band in music in my life. You know, the kind where you really feel it in your system. You know, it's like an atom bomb exploding. I didn't realize that music could take you that far off into the stratosphere. So he played us some tapes he had, some unreleased tapes of the band, and they played a million miles an hour. But the sound of the music, the sound quality not the playing, does not rate with the sound of a Supertramp album. The faster you play the more unclear it gets, the softer you hit the drums the shittier they sound, that kind of thing. So that was a lesson for me.

RT: What does it mean that production is now back in the group's hands with Steve Morse doing it? Is the band freer in the studio now?

continued on page 64

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1979—MAY: N.Y. Studio Scene (Bernard Purdie, Herb Lovelle, Grady Tate, Ralph MacDonald) Foreign Drum Report, Poll Results.

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nique.

OCTOBER: Gene Krupa Tribute Issue (bio, discography, photos,
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Slingerland Contest Results, The Club Scene.

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continued from page 46

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Q. Since your mylar drum heads were so successful, Sam, what motivated you to improve them?

A. We made a big step forward when we went from calfskin to mylar—but that was over 20 years ago. Since that time there have been developments in technology that make a better head feasible.

Q. But what specifically were you trying to improve?

A. First of all, every drummer knows that a mylar head can break in the middle of an important set—so that you have to stop and replace the head immediately. That won't happen with a Duraline head. It's many times stronger than mylar. So, on the off-chance that the head becomes damaged, you can still finish the gig without changing it! Incredible! How did you develop a head like that?

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Q. That's amazing, Sam. How long did it take for you to develop the Superheads?

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Q. What have been the reactions of the pros to these heads?

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Q. Is it a coincidence that your new Duraline Supersticks are being introduced at about the same time as your new heads?

A. No. They are both made from the same durable material. However, Supersticks are made from fibers which are woven in a way that duplicates the feel of natural wood.

Q. How much usage can a drummer expect from a pair of your Duraline sticks?

A. A hell of a lot! They will show wear over a period of time, but they are really tough to break and won't give out suddenly during a set. And every drummer knows how important that is!

Q. How would you describe the playing response of your Supersticks?

A. They really feel much like a high quality hickory stick—with the same natural tensile strength and weight. Sure, they're somewhat more expensive than wood sticks, but our pros go through several sets of wood sticks for the comparable wear of one set of Supersticks.

Q. You have stated that every Superstick is an identical twin. How is that possible and what does it mean to the drummer?

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Morgenstein: continued from page 61

RM: I guess. Everyone does what they want to do, essentially. And you don't have to deal with another person. I think it was the greatest experience working with Ken, because he showed me a lot as far as the drums and studio techniques. But ultimately a band wants to take charge of its destiny. Naturally, whenever you're dealing with someone else, you don't want to offend them. There's always been a time factor, a lack of money, the record has to be done by a certain time, and you're dealing with all these people in the band who have all these ideas. Well when someone else is running the show, they have the power to tell you when it's not really going to happen. You know, if you have an idea, either there's not really time for it, or they don't think it's going to fit their concept. Whereas if you are in complete charge, you can maybe just sneak it in there, and see what it sounds like.

RT: You use Paiste cymbals. Have you always used them?

RM: No. I don't think they were in existence when I started playing. Everything was A Zildjian. K Zildjian's were a drag when you were young. It wasn't until you became aware that K Zildjians were the cool cymbals to play, because the youngsters only heard of the Buddy Rich's. No one heard of Tony Williams or Elvin Jones or Jack DeJohnette. I was

about 18 or 19 before I heard of those guys. So it was strictly A Zildjian. And then when Paiste came out, I really liked the fact that they seemed to do a lot of experimentation. Now, they're so competitive, they all have all these different prototypes.

RT: What size stick do you use in concert?

RM: All different sizes. Probably between a 2A and a 5A.

RT: Watching your feet last night while you played, I noticed that you use a flat approach on the bass drum foot, but at times move up to the ball of your foot.

RM: Yes. When the double bass drums are used I go right up to the ball. I wish I didn't, because you lose control that way. But there's so much pain, I still after all these years get that harsh pain on the instep. And I can't play fast when the foot is down like that. When you get up on your toes, if you need it you can get your whole body into it, and your legs pounding away. But you do lose a little bit of control.

RT: You aren't using any of the electronic drum devices, *Synares*, *Syn-drums*, or the like.

RM: Just what I've heard on records, I don't particularly go for. It's not for my ear. I hear a lot of similar sounds in it. I think it might be neat at some point. Billy

continued on page 67

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Marotta: continued from page 33

MR: But, especially as someone who's self taught, and by your own admission, not the world's greatest reader, how did you come to work so consistently?

RM: Well, it's true that people want me because of the way I play . . . and I'm not concerned with how fast I can play. I play simply, keep good, solid time. I can play with maniacs, but I always feel better playing just a little behind the rest of the band, making everyone strain a bit to become relaxed. People feel real conscious of time when they play with me. Which means they think I have good time. They'll ask me if their time is okay . . . and meanwhile, I have no idea! Maybe it's from the dancing, though. I always feel when I drop the sticks, they just seem to land on the right beat. And, I really like to play the backbeats.

MR: When the younger players started moving into the studios, do you think that created a place for more "feel" drummers?

RM: Well, before I came in you had Bernard Purdie, who plays with a lot of funk, Russ Kunkel in L.A., Alan Schwartzberg, Herb Lovelle, Denny Seiwell for a while in New York. I guess, though, there was nobody who played like me.

MR: When did you start moving out of the New York studios and gain a lot more notice as a rock sideman?

RM: Around the time of Linda Ronstadt's *Simple Dreams* album (released in 1977). I was out of New York for about two years. Linda hired me for recording and touring out of Los Angeles. And I also did sessions with Warren Zevon. I think he's great, incidentally. He lets me do things other people won't.

Like on his new album, I slam down on the tom-toms and do weird beats—simple stuff, but very oddball. I went on the road with him, too. And, J. D. Souther also became someone I really like to work with. He's a drummer, and he makes me play stuff so simple-sounding, it's really hard to execute. Like on "You're Only Lonely," he knew exactly the pattern he wanted,

and I had to play it. We couldn't do any fills. And so the more we did it, the harder it was to play. On the whole album, we did four takes on each song, and the production took over a year.

And, Steely Dan are great, too. They'll tell me what to do but also give me a lot of latitude. For example, if Chuck Rainey and I fall into a nice groove, they say, "Whoa. Stop. Do it like that." And the songs are so incredible, they inspire you. Because Fagan sings them live; he cuts them first at the piano, and then I play to just him. I even came in one time when the whole band was on the record, and they took off the old drummer and put new drums on.

MR: Who else have you liked recording with?

RM: Jackson Browne, because he sings and writes and performs well. He sings, in fact, while we're cutting the tracks. And I like that, because I want to be part of the music. I don't want to just lay down tracks and months later hear horns and strings added on. That's why Karla Bonoff is another, amazing person to record with. And that's why I like working in Los Angeles. New York, sometimes, is too over-dubbed and segmented in terms of production.

MR: Does your playing style change from session to session, depending on who you're working for?

RM: Sometimes, it has to. With Roberta Flack, I play sensitively and quietly. With Goro Noguchi, this Japanese teen idol I played with recently in Japan, I got a real knocking wood sound going, a real showy, Vegas style.

MR: Let's talk about Ronin. Why did you decide to get into a band again?

RM: The people in Ronin are my friends. And everyone in the band wanted to play rock and roll before we got too old. We've been together for three years, since Waddy Wachtel and Dan Dugmore and I worked with Linda Ronstadt. We know each other separately and together. Do you know what I mean?

MR: I think I know. You like to play and if you can play in a

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Morgenstein: *continued from page 64*

Cobham does some great things with the effects. I remember he had a whole channel of foot pedals for those sorts of things. It's also a question of time. It takes time getting these things together, and when you're on the road most of your life, just doing the little that we do is hard enough to maintain. I would like to try things with digital delays and other kinds of things. I wish we could carry some of those studio effects that we use on the drums, like a limiter, which creates a really neat effect. Are you familiar with the *What If* album? We use the limiter on the tom-toms on the song "Ice Cakes." And also that room effect that they use to make drums sound real big. It would be great to have those things live.

RT: "Ice Cakes" was listed as your vocal tune.

RM: That was a joke. Apparently, when I play I really grunt loud, and I'm not really aware that I'm doing it, but it helps me play better. So they were picking up my voice. They didn't know what it was, no one knew. And then they traced it to my voice. And they thought it'd be funny to put a mike on me, and mix it in and out during the song. It really got to be a problem, that in the next album we recorded they had to tape my mouth.

RT: Tape it closed?

RM: Yeah, because it got so annoying hearing me. So they put a big piece of duct tape right across. I think it really helps me play better. It helps me to get over the hump of the physical part of it, because I'm not a strong person. I don't work out. You know, the drumming is the workout. I do a few warmup type things, but I find that when I scream it gives me, unconsciously I guess, the extra edge.

RT: Are you aware of the way you look onstage?

RM: I'm aware of it when I see pictures that people have taken, and they're weird. A guy gave us these tonight. And I look at a picture like this . . . (He holds out a picture of himself in action, hair flying, eyes wide, mouth open).

RT: That's a typical look, Rod. Very animated.

RM: I don't believe it. I'm not aware of it. I'm glad I make a lot of expressions when I play. I never consciously worked at it. But most drummers that you see frown, or don't have any expression, and even if they're great players, it's a drag if they're not, like you say, animated. I really like seeing a band checking each other out, making jokes on stage, laughing, and genuinely having a good time. It's weird when they're in their own world. If music can't be a good time, and a joyful experience, there's no point in doing it. And regardless of what level of

musicianship a person is at, what's the difference? It's just being joyful.

RT: Did you feel, even when you were playing the smallest of clubs, that someday the Dregs would make it big?

RM: I think so, in the back of my mind. Because the responses we got from audiences everywhere has been so positive, even when there were only a few people in the audience. We've always gotten that kind of response.

RT: Will success spoil the Dixie Dregs?

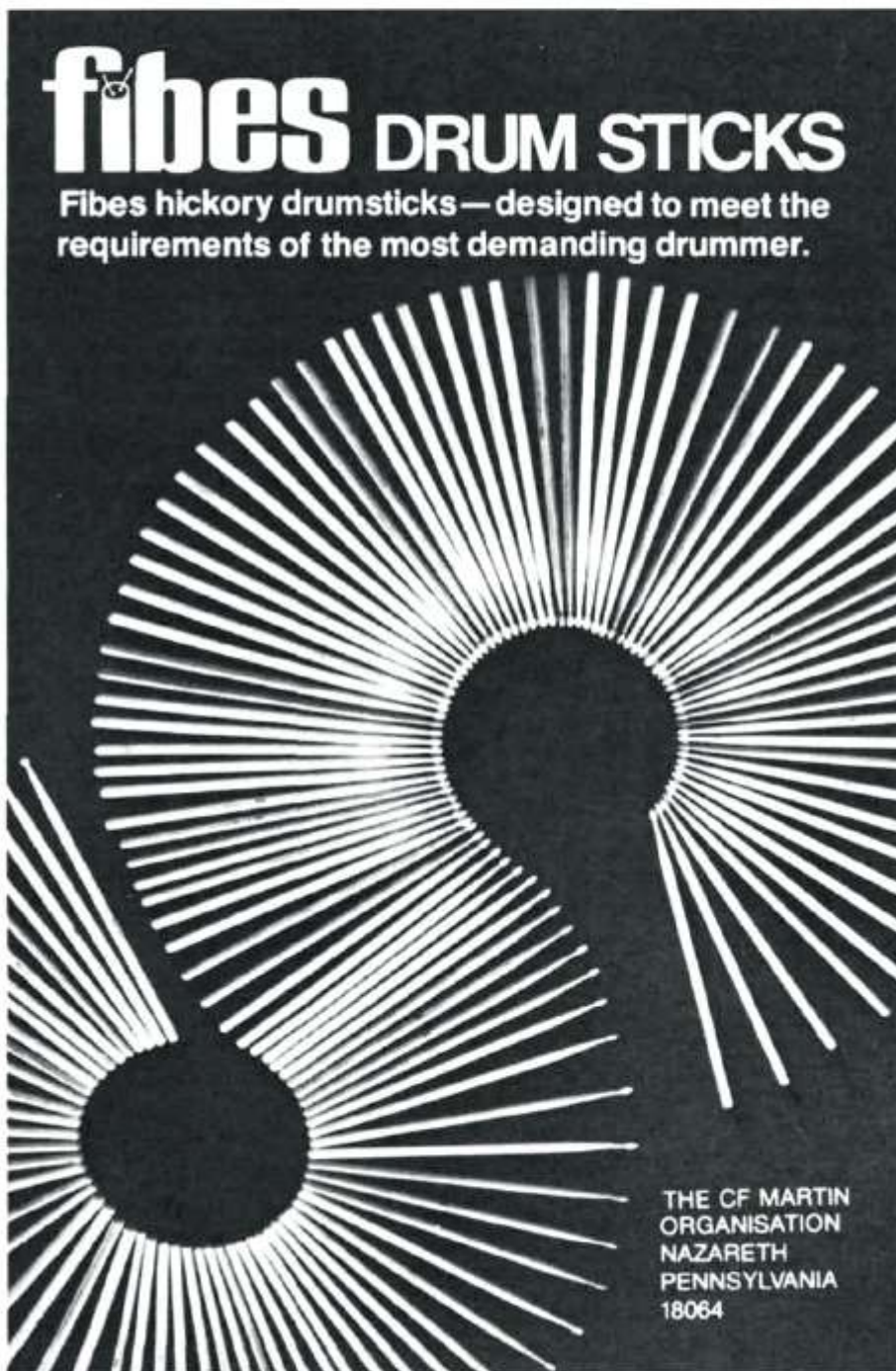
RM: No, I don't see how. Because the

success we've achieved has been such a gradual thing. We've been on the road for five years. It's no overnight success story.

RT: The Dregs are one of only a few fusion type bands that have continued to build an audience over the last few years. How do you account for this?

RM: The strength of the Dregs is the writing. People like to hear diversified music. You can keep challenging them with something different, and just when they think they're grasping the situation,

continued on page 68



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Morgenstein: continued from page 67

you let the bottom drop out, and go on to something else. And just fill the air with every different mood possible. You know, get some raucous rock and roll to get them on their feet, and then take them to heaven with ethereal, eclectic stuff. And what I think's important is that we reach people on different levels. We appeal to the musician types because we're musicians. There are people who like to analyze and know music from a technical standpoint. And so people can relate to that. And yet on the other hand, people that are just into listening, and don't know what they're listening for, can appreciate it. To me, it's melodic, exciting, it's not boring. Yet people come in and can sing along with a lot of the things. And even the club rowdy beer drinkers, they get off on the energy. So I think it's the combination of all those things, the fact that it is musical, that there's variety, and it's energetic. It combines everything. And that's where I think the fault lies with a lot of so called fusion bands. Is jazz-rock really fusion? The fact that people play odd time signatures and grooves, is that fusion? Or is fusion combining the elements of classical, country, bluegrass, rock, jazz, and Elizabethan styles? That, to me, is fusion. And I think we run into trouble calling ourselves fusion, because then we're linked with this other style of music.

RT: The disco fad seems to be dying out a bit. What do you see as the shape of the future of music in the '80's?

RM: That's a good question. I think musical alternatives. I don't think the public has been given enough credit for what they think's good. There's a real vicious cycle that's created. Something gets played on the radio and it sells, and therefore the people who run the industry think that that's all people want to hear. I think the reason that bands like ours, and say Metheny or whoever, are not bigger, is because they haven't gotten the exposure that they deserve. And that there is a market out there for that kind of thing. People are ready for it. And I think there's going to be more bands like us coming out, instead of just this automated, one after another, ditto-ditto-ditto music. The disco's dying, but now the new wave thing is starting to come, which is another thing where a lot sounds the same, and no one wants to take chances. There's probably always going to be that kind of thing happening. There's always going to be that bland kind of unchallenging music. I mean, music that's not a challenge to the ear is easy to sell. You can just stick it on, listen to it and have parties and have it playing, take a shower and have it playing, and do your homework and have it playing. You don't really absorb it. But I think the market is growing for this other

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kind of challenging music. I think it's always been there, it's just that no one's been given the chance to know it's there.

RT: There is a blues shuffle tune on the new Dregs album.

RM: Yes, that's "Twiggs Approved." Twiggs was our road manager, and he was road manager of the Allman Brothers before we met him. And there are some human beings that are just too hard to put into words what they are or were like. But he was special. There's nobody like him. He had the kind of analytical mind that could figure out anything. It was almost superhuman, frightening. As technical as he was about everything in the world around him, his favorite music was the blues. Muddy Waters, Lightnin' Hopkins, all those kind of guys. And he'd just sit and talk with us for hours. He always said we should do blues, and after this song was written for him, he made a prediction before he died that that particular song could bring blues to the people. Whereas it's really been an underground thing for all its years in existence, but there's never been a commercial blues success. So that song is important.

RT: Do you ever have any desire to do studio work?

RM: I think it'd be fun to try. I think the challenge is unbelievable. When you're playing with a band, a lot of things you do night after night are the same. Especially in a band of this sort. A lot of the stuff is worked out, lick oriented, although I think most playing is. But in the studio, it seems every time you walk in you're dealing with an entirely new situation, someone putting music in front of you. The stories I hear about Steve Gadd are incredible. I've heard stories about the Aja album, that has some great playing on it, and even the *Leprechaun* album. They run through it once, if that, and then turn the tapes on. In his case, a lot of his recording, or probably most studio musicians' recording happens the day of the rehearsal. And that's fantastic. That must be really taxing on the mind. It's a different world. But then again you get to be home. That would be nice. But no matter who you're talking to, the grass is always greener. Rock musicians say they'd love to do some studio work, and say why. And then studio musicians just want to get a deal and get back out on the road again, like the case of Toto. They're all studio musicians, and we just did a date with them. And the E Street Band in Manhattan with Hiram Bullock on guitar and Cliff Carter on keyboards, they're the top New York studio musicians. I mean they get a lot of work, and they're itching to get a band together, get a deal, and go out on the road. So, everybody wants to do what they're not doing, or get a taste of it.

RT: Your drumming has been described as "melodic." Has studying other instruments contributed to that style?

RM: I think so. It helps because you think musically, like a musician. Think about the drummers that play other instruments, that know a little bit more. Jack DeJohnette, Tony Williams, Michael Walden, Billy Cobham. If you can approach it from another standpoint where you know what the guys are doing, it can really help you decide how to play a passage. It does come in handy, because you think a little more symphonically, and how to play them from

that approach, as opposed to just banging the hell out of them. And when you're five guys in an instrumental band, you have to be thinking of ways to get as many sounds as possible out of the instrument you play. You want to constantly keep variety of sounds, as well as variety of styles. Always change the sound. Always hit a different drum. Think of the drums as one of five instruments, as in this band and what can they do to round out and complete what the others are playing. That's a good way to think.



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Marotta: *continued from page 66*

band with people you know, it's an enjoyable experience for you. And if the record (*Ronin*, Mercury), doesn't sell a million copies, that's okay, in a way.

RM: Right. It's not going to be *agonizing*.

MR: And, if you do have commercial success, the band is mature enough to handle it and will not go off in a million directions. Which is the kind of stability you've been aiming for, because you really do like roadwork—you like crowds liking you.

RM: Exactly. And on the day our tour ends, we'll go right to rehearsing for James Taylor's tour and our next album. Which means that I'll have a great chance to observe my own playing—how I'm functioning as a drummer, as a musician. Plus, it really helps having Peter Asher behind us, managing and producing, and helping us in every way. Believe me, I've already felt in every way how great proper management is. I know when he calls me to do something, I'll do it and there will be concrete results.

MR: Would you want to lead your own band?

RM: I don't know yet. Right now, I want the best of both worlds, touring and jingles. On the road, I get to play differently every time I go out with someone—which way, I can't predict. I can discover myself playing a new way on the road and that one experience can make a whole tour worthwhile. The live situation enhances invention, because you play the same song every night and if it gets boring, you can give it a new nuance. People in the audience may not notice it, but you do. But at the same time the audience creates a tension. We're putting ourselves on the block, and they're holding the axe.

And in the studio, I like the caliber of the players, and of the writing we interpret. It's creative. It's satisfying. And it's taught me an awful lot of important things.

MR: Let's talk about your equipment. How many sets of

drums do you have?

RM: Basically, I have sets in New York, one in LA, one in Japan. The Yamaha is a Japanese set I checked out through Steve Gadd; the company has them in storage for me now. I never endorsed any drums before these.

MR: Why?

RM: I never liked any. I end up making each of my drums myself. They look unbelievably funky; I buy 'em, take 'em apart, drill holes in them ... but they sound great to me. And that's all I care about.

MR: What brands did you buy?

RM: My New York set is a 10 year old Gretsch. The 8" and 10" tom-toms are Pearls, I got rid of the 14" and mounted a 13" Ludwig on the bass drum. I also have a 16" floor tom-tom. They originally all had one head, but I drilled holes, put casters in and on the bottom of the 8 and 10 I put Diplomats. On the bottoms of the bigger toms I use Ambassadors, because I like the way they resonate. I'm even probably gonna try the Ambassadors on the smaller ones, because I never get enough tone out of the small toms. The bass drum is a 22" Gretsch; I use a hydraulic head on it. It's funny, Gadd and I always have this big discussion: I try to get him to use Ambassadors and Diplomats, and he uses hydraulics on all his drums. We use the opposites, yet I like the way his drums sound, too.

MR: What about your LA set?

RM: It's exactly the same, except Ludwig instead of Gretsch; the shells aren't as thick. They're the drums I use most on records.

MR: Why did you buy those particular brands in the first place?

RM: I bought the Ludwigs a long time ago after the roadie hocked my drums when I was in Brethren. Then I gave the Ludwigs to my brother and bought a big set of Gretsch. I wanted to change. I didn't want any heads on the bottom. And they had

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darker wood; they were good-looking. They sounded okay, too, but to my ears something wasn't quite right, after a while. So I went back to my Ludwigs, after using the Gretsch for two years. Then I went back to the Gretsch and put bottom heads on 'em, and took the dotted rock and roll heads off—I hate those heads—and the difference was night and day.

MR: What kind of sound difference did you get?

RM: I like very loosely tuned drums, that will ring forever. You hit 'em, and they don't sound like jazz drums. They're rock n' roll drums. You hit 'em and the notes bend, and they flap and they're noisy. They sound like garbage cans.

MR: What about the Yamahas?

RM: They're prototypes the company has given me, along with Gadd and one other drummer. They have 8", 10", 12", 13", 14", 15" and 16" tom-toms. I don't use all of them; I like the 12 but not the 14. There's a 22" bass drum. The casing in the drum shelves is very thick, which means they really don't resonate enough for me. But for recording, they ought to be great, after I put my usual heads on them, re-tune them, and get them into the studio.

MR: What's the set-up other than the tom-toms?

RM: With the snare drum I use one drum, the same one, which I carry back and forth between coasts. It's a Ludwig, with an ECM 50 microphone inside. I've had great luck with that. But, at the same time, Yamaha has given me a couple of snare drums, which I used when I was in Japan, and they were amazing. They're wooden, and they have a trashy, open sound I like. The sound hits, and it spreads all over the place. Exactly the opposite of what most *Modern Drummer* readers want, right?

MR: What do you mean by that?

RM: Well, most engineers hate them. They say, "You can't record with this. You have to deaden this. You have to squeeze the sound smaller. I go crazy, pull the pads off of the mikes, lift them up a bit, hit them hard. Sometimes I see the engineers'

hair stand straight up. But I just like a livelier snare sound.

MR: Are you going to work with Yamaha on any projects?

RM: They are sending me a fourth set, of their new *Sunbursts*, which are wood drums, and thinner on the shells than the other prototype, but similar otherwise. And if I have an idea, I call them. Already I've told them on their hi-hat stands, the footplate is at too much of an angle, and it ends up hurting my leg. Anything a couple of centimeters off can be a problem for me.

MR: What cymbals, sticks and pedals do you use?

RM: Pearl footpedals and Pearl hi-hat stands. In cymbals, I like four: from left to right, an 18" crash, usually an A. Zildjian; a live 16" crash, either Paiste or Zildjian; a 22" Medium Ride, usually A. Zildjian; an 18", 19" or 20" Chinese gong with sizzles in it, which is an oddball cymbal to have, but I always carry one because I never know when I'm gonna slap it.

MR: How about sticks?

RM: I used to have a stick called a Rick Marotta stick, but then they changed the name to an Elvin Jones stick because Elvin sold more of those in Japan. This was about five years ago. Frank Ippolito made them at Professional Percussion in New York. It was a good stick. I liked the bead, the neck, the butt end, the weight.

MR: You went through others before that?

RM: Yeah, 5As, 5Bs, everything, skinny, big. Right now, I use a stick I found in LA, at Professional Percussion there; their rock stick. It's sturdy, though sometimes too sturdy. I vacillate between it and a Manny's rock and roll stick. I like a heavy, solid stick. Jazz players like it light and smaller; rock and roll players like a big baseball-bat-like stick. I'm right in the middle.

MR: What about your pedals?

RM: I used to like *Speed Kings*, but I would break them playing with my toe as much as I do. Jazzers tend to play flat-footed, and I play on the ball of my foot. So now I use Pearls.

MR: What drums do you take on the road with Ronin?

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A Wake-up for Drum Sections

by Nancy Clayton

You have probably heard your band director say to the brass and woodwind players, "Let's play that chorale once more. Listen to your tone. Practice warming-up every day." Band directors spend a lot of time with warm-ups for wind players, but what about drum sections?

Snare drummers usually play through exercises or rudiments, but for a well balanced percussion section, everyone should warm-up . . . bass drummers, cymbal players, and timp-tom people, especially during marching season.

Warm-ups for drum sections have been around for years. The piece of music this warm-up exercise is based upon, *The Three Camps*, has been played for more than a hundred years. If you

had been a drummer during the Civil War, your basic training would have included *The Reveille (Three Camps or Points Of War)* and the rest of the Camp Duty For Snare Drummers.

Yankee or Confederate, it made no difference when it came to drumming in the army. Drummers beat out calls for troops for all their movements, from breakfast to battle. *The Three Camps* was one of the most important, however, as it was used as the wake-up call.

Instead of alarm clocks, it was Five, Ten and Eleven Stroke Rolls to wake-up to. Of course bugles were also used, but for the most part, army drummers played for everything. They

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even played a separate drum beat for roast beef!

The roast beef call is different from the wake-up call. Wake-up is in 4/4 time, while roast beef is in 6/8. But each and every call was different, with the drummers responsible for playing the correct call for the correct occasion.

The *Three Camps* wake-up uses a basic accent pattern, making it a good exercise for modern drummers. The accents fall into a 3, 3, 7, sounding pattern with triplets, paradiddles and rolls.

When the whole section plays, the snares play these basic beats, while the other instruments keep time in patterns that fit into 4/4. Some drum sections use the wake-up as a cadence, so I have included bass drum, timp-tom trio and cymbals, as an example.

There is one big drawback to practicing any warm-up; it's

boring. But the *Three Camps* may change that condition. First, play all 3 sections (triplets, paradiddles and rolls) in a slow, steady tempo. Then, repeat all 3 sections, this time playing in a quicker tempo. Then play all 3 even faster. Caution! Things get interesting when the snares hit the paradiddles and rolls at a faster tempo, but that is part of the exercise.

Only play the entire piece at a tempo the section is together on. Breakdowns are no fun. Besides, you'll be surprised as to how fast you can get on the Camps, once you have started slowly, and understand the pattern.

Rolls are basic for all drummers, and with the added accents, triplets, paradiddles and tempo changes, The *Three Camps* wake-up should help in more ways than just as a warm-up.

Remember, whether you play the Camps wake-up or another exercise, be sure to warm-up properly. Warming-up might make the difference between a "sleepy" drum section and a wide awake percussion unit.

THREE CAMPS WAKE-UP FOR DRUM SECTIONS

1st Camp

2nd Camp

3rd Camp

Marotta: continued from page 73

RM: I'm gonna take the *Sunbursts* as soon as they come, but most usually, I take the LA set. All my road cases are in LA.

MR: You've talked about some of your favorite recording situations. Do you have any good stories about jingles, like the best and the worst you ever worked on?

RM: Once, we did do a hair-raising, 30 second spot, that took us 2 1/2 hours to finish. They wrote the music to the visual, and then they took the film and cut out frames, so none of the hits landed properly. So we had to rewrite the commercial. So the arranger was writing three-fourth bars, quarter bars and seven-eighths bars. It was nuts. There was a horse in the commercial. Everytime I see it, I feel like shooting the horse. On the other hand, I did one for the United Negro College fund, about five years ago, that Deodato wrote. We did it to a clock on a wall. It had to be 20 seconds long. The bass player was Richard Davis and Airtio was on percussion. They just gave us a downbeat and we had to play a certain number of bars in 20 seconds. It's pretty rare to improvise a jingle like that, though the changes were written out for us. It came off really well, and it was a challenge.

MR: Who are some of your other influences?

RM: Jimmy Keltner, for sure. He just plays real funky, slap-pin' everything all over the place, like on Delaney and Bonnie's "When The Battle Was Over." You can't say drums without mentioning Keltner. He's a monster. And Hugh McCracken, the guitarist here in New York, because of the way he plays. He's so laid back, it's like putting a hand in a glove. I'm intense, I want to get a job over with, but when he comes, he packs a lunch. I wouldn't be surprised, in fact, if he brought a tent to the gig. He's so patient! And he's such an inspiration, he's unbelievable.

MR: I don't know if we still captured just how you sound.

RM: I play differently. I don't think someone can really peg me. Except to say that I play just like I did when I was a kid.

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Marsh: continued from page 19

with. My approach is to discover rudiments that are simple and basic.

CB: For example, a single stroke roll with two hands is obvious but there is a single stroke roll with four limbs. That, according to your definition, is a rudiment?

GM: Yes, a rudiment. It exists, there is no denying that it exists and that that is a possibility for someone playing with four limbs, and a fact that we do that when we play at certain times.

CB: So basically your approach is a universal approach to four limbs on a drumset.

GM: That's it right there. That sums it up. It means quite a lot though. It means that you pay attention to how it feels to go from, for instance, the right foot to the left hand and back, and what it feels like in your body. If you do it very slowly you focus on what it feels like going up your leg, through your torso, out your left arm and to the left stick. If you discover there are some areas in there you can't feel, then that's something you need to work on because you don't have contact with that part of your body. If there is a stop of flow when you are doing a pattern then you learn that, and that goes into your brain with the tensions involved in that. But there is a greater acceptance of a pattern that includes relaxation so you learn that pattern much faster. It's as if you say, "Yes, yes, boom, that's it" as opposed to, "Oh well, I'll learn it." The sort of patterns that hurt, I've played them. Don't. Just eliminate them. You don't have to have them anymore although there might be some that are challenging and require a lot of muscle. However, there is a danger involved in practicing and playing really relaxed.

CB: What's the danger?

GM: There may be music you don't want to play, tense music, competitive music or overly loud music. When you start becoming sensitive, it's not really a danger. I'm only joking, but there is the possibility that you are going to reject many kinds of music.

continued on page 80

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A Conductor-Arranger Talks to Drummers

by Laura Deni

"It sure as hell would help if drummers would listen to the entire orchestra, rather than just concern themselves with their own immediate surroundings."

The man speaking is Nick Perito, conductor/arranger for Perry Como, Steve Lawrence & Eydie Gorme, Ferrante & Teicher, Shirley Bassey, Bobby Vinton, Shirley MacLaine and countless others.

"Drummers don't listen to the rest of the orchestra," he charged.

Is that the major mistake that drummers make?

"Yes," answered Perito without hesitating.

"Drummers have to be aware of everything that's going on," continued the Juilliard graduate. "I'm talking about a stage band drummer. In a symphony orchestra there isn't that much room to stretch out. What you're going to do is pre-determined. So you don't get the freedom of expression that a contemporary orchestra would allow a drummer. In a contemporary orchestra the area of stretch-out is really unlimited."

How can a drummer be creative without getting fired?

"Oh, a leader would kiss a creative drummer on the lips," exclaimed Perito. "Of course the leader is the boss. But I know for myself, often times I will write a part and say to the drummer, 'Insert some of yourself, a lot of yourself.'"

"The drummer is the most intrinsic part of any group," continued Perito. "The drummer is the hub upon which the whole orchestra rotates, either smoothly or with a bump. The drummer is the central force—the energy.

"A drummer can make a band swing, or not swing. A friend of mine in California says one of the primary requisites of a drummer is to have a killer instinct. That does bear some semblance of truth, because a drummer really has to have an aggressive kind of attitude, or some aggressive qualities.

"There are times when he must be beautifully subtle, but there are times when he must be totally aggressive, forthright, because when he hits that cymbal he can't call it back. He must really be able to put his statement on the line.

"I knew a drummer who had a great influence on my life," recalled Perito. "His name was Terry Snyder. Many years ago he made an album called *Persuasive Percussion* during the beginning of hi-fi. He made the album with the Enoch Light Orchestra and it made the charts.

"Terry Snyder was the drummer on the Perry Como TV show. He was a left handed drummer, of all things. I was just beginning in New York at the time and I saw Terry on dates turn an ordinary arrangement into something very exciting. The man had an innovative way of playing. He had a creativity in interpreting what a tempo should really be, what a jazz piece should really be, even a waltz. Whatever we were playing he would add something of himself to it.

"If the drummer can add something of his own it helps," reiterated Perito. "Some little innovativeness, an extra kick, a little thing here and there. By listening to the whole orchestra, the drum-

mer can hear a motif develop. He can bring a fresh, new idea to it that maybe the arranger didn't think of."

Where are the jobs for drummers today?

"Las Vegas, places where they use live music," he answered. "There are centers like New York and Los Angeles where you have films and records. You've got commercials. Chicago and Nashville are good. Studio musicians are generally the same little clique that do all the dates."


Is it possible to break into that clique?

"Sure, but it's rough," admitted Perito. "Learn how to play *every style of music*. The drummer particularly should be schooled in jazz and classical, as well as contemporary music."

Do they need an agent?

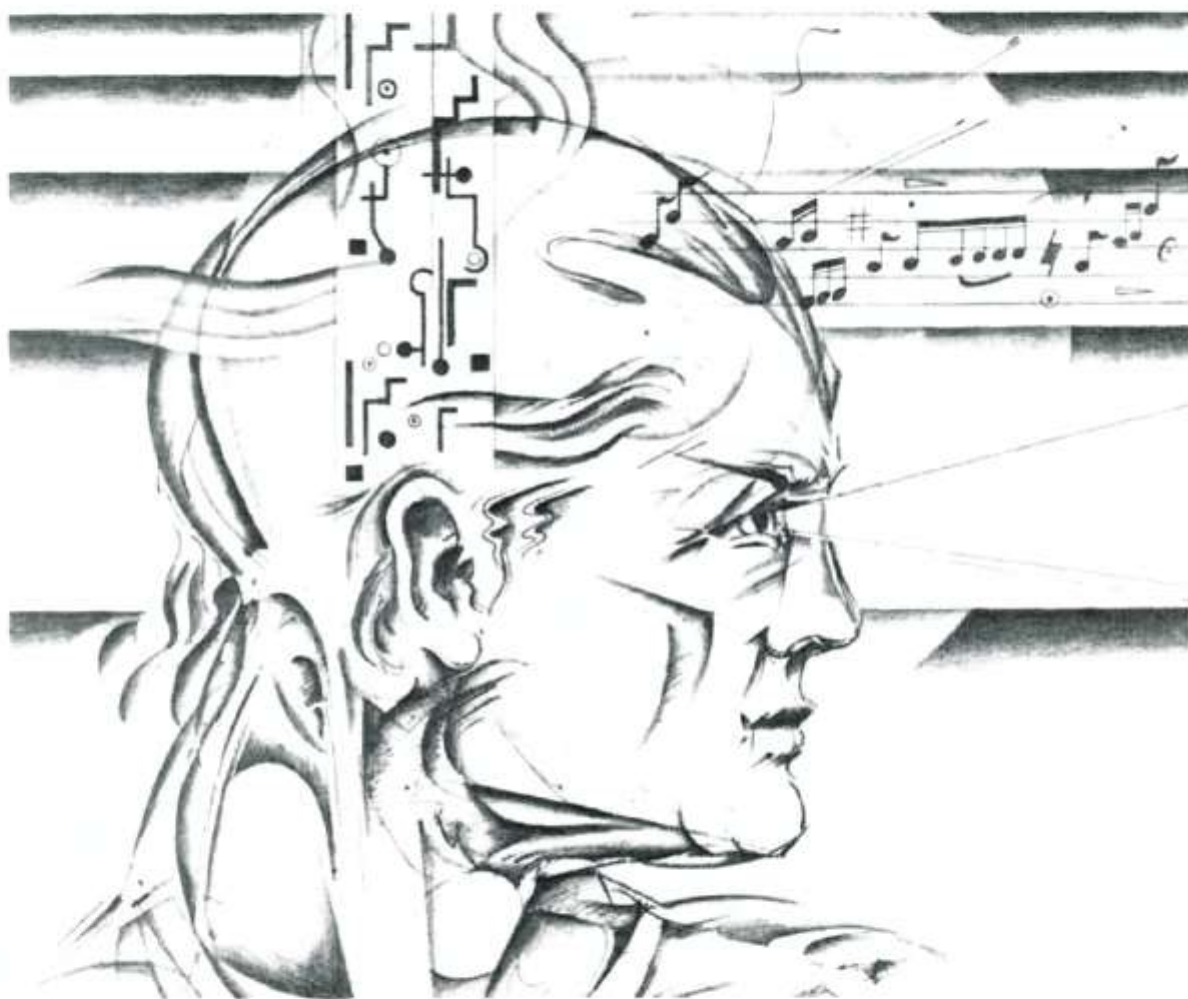
"No," came the quick reply. "I don't know exactly how it happens, but it happens. Your playing speaks louder for you than any agent can ever speak. Musicians are a closely knit group. They talk about the new exciting guy in town, and you develop a reputation."

Should a good drummer stick to his playing or attempt to understand the emotional make-up of who he is working for?

"Drummers need a broad personal spectrum. They must have an incredible sense of rhythm and timing. But they also need a good sense of humor which comes across in their playing. They have to be both compassionate and aggressive. Their palette has to be filled with all of the colors. Any good musician is like that, but particularly a drummer." 

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Marsh: continued from page 77

CB: What would you hope a drummer would get out of practicing with your book?

GM: I hope they will discover that they can play in many different ways they didn't know they could. They are not going to have just two or three styles they can play, they are going to be able to make up patterns that aren't necessarily in any style. A drummer will be more capable of understanding what his limits are and therefore feel freer. By understanding his limits he is going to explore and won't underestimate what he can play. He'll know what he can play and will play it.

CB: Expanding self-awareness, is that an adequate term in relation to what you have just said?

GM: In relation to drums, yes. Also, there will be a more direct connection in the way you feel about music and what comes out. That is the point of all these exercises, knowing how it feels to go from one limb to another in different ways and with combinations, unisons, and patterns all carefully worked out so that there is a limit and it is real. There are just so many basic ways you can play with three limbs and just so many with four. When you do the exercises you connect yourself completely to them and at the same time you are following it with your mind as much as possible, so that when you play, thinking will be playing and playing will be thinking. There doesn't have to be this duality, where sometimes you're totally into it and at other times you are more disconnected. You will be connected to your playing. That is what I have discovered. These exercises must be played with a musical sense. They are exercises you work on, but you have to start hearing what is coming out musically.

CB: You have just joined the Slingerland Drum Company as a clinician. What do you hope to get out of this experience?

GM: I believe it's an opening up. Being with them is like a credential. It is going to allow me easier access to get around

continued on page 85

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Bass Drum Technique



by Ed Soph

The bass drum foot should be developed with the same technical/musical objectives as the hands: control of tempo, dynamics, and syncopation. A simple approach to these objectives is to relate bass drum technique to hand technique.

REBOUND

A stroke produced by the hands consists of a downstroke and an upstroke. The upstroke is produced by the rebound of the stick *off* the drums or cymbals. The principle of tension and release in music, is also found in this basic technique. The tension of the muscles which produce the downstroke is released by allowing the stick to rebound. This balance of downstroke/tension—upstroke/release is a prerequisite for relaxed endurance.

If we do not equate bass technique with hand technique, we may be apt to play the bass drum without the immediate, in time release of muscle tension. A common example of this is pressing the beater into the head and not releasing it until the preparatory stroke for the next figure. This technique is not wrong, but it is limiting. Imagine if we had been taught to play the snare by pressing the sticks into the head!

STROKES

Strokes are the raw material of drumming. They determine dynamic range, syncopative ability, and tempo range. We develop the hands by practicing maximum strokes and minimum strokes of the arms, wrists, and fingers. The same may be done with the bass drum foot provided the pedal allows us an expanse of stroke similar to that of the wrist. Don't try to play loudly with a pedal which has a stroke of only three to four inches. To play loudly with such a set-up is very uncomfortable. One must "force" the stroke, grinding the beater into the head, and destroying the dynamic blend of the set. One would have to over-play to get a dynamic level equal to the full stroke of the wrists. Experiment. Find a maximum stroke which offers an attack equal in intensity to an unforced maximum stroke of the wrists.

TENSION OF THE PEDAL

The tension of the pedal determines the fulcrum of the foot. Where the balance of the fulcrum in the right hand is between the thumb and first finger, the fulcrum for the bass drum foot is established between the relaxed weight of the foot on the pedal, and the tension of the pedal. The pedal tension should support the relaxed foot almost in the position of the pedal's maximum stroke. The pedal tension is too loose if the beater falls against the head or stops within three or four inches when the foot is placed on the pedal.

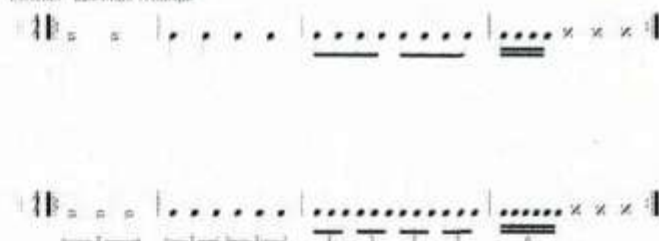
Don't despair, if in tightening the pedal or elongating the stroke, your muscles ache. You must take your time and give the muscles chance to conform to the new stroke and tension.

Right-handers taught traditional grip will remember the agony of trying to hold the left stick straight-up without grinding the elbow into the body. That's the way the muscles of the leg will feel until they relax through practice.

EXERCISES

Here are two basic exercises which, with the aid of a metronome, will help to develop your bass drum technique:

Exercise: Bass-Drum Technique



Assuming that the pedal is adjusted as discussed earlier, play these exercises 1) With the maximum stroke allowed by the tempo and note values. 2) With the minimum stroke. In both approaches, allow the pedal to rebound immediately after striking the head. No hesitation, no pressing into the head.

You may prefer to play the larger note values with the heel stationary, and the smaller note values with the heel elevated; the "toe technique." That's fine, as long as the rebound is consistent in both techniques. The ease with which you can use these two techniques (and any others) depends upon the height of the throne and its distance from the set. Experiment and find the height and distance where different techniques may be used without altering the balance of the upper body.

Exercises combining the maximum and minimum strokes are found in accent patterns. The accented notes may be called maximum, or larger strokes. Unaccented notes are minimum, or smaller strokes. Some excellent books with accent patterns which avail themselves to bass drum practice are the *Berklee Series Drum Method*, by Alan Dawson and Don DeMichael; Ted Reed's, *Progressive Steps To Syncopation*; George Stone's, *Accents And Rebounds*; Chapin's, *Advanced Techniques*; and *Subject: Control* by Marvin Gordon, edited by Saul Feldstein.

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Marsh: *continued from page 80*

the country, into stores, and meeting people as opposed to just
 being here in San Francisco, which I do like, but I'll be able to
 move around more and be my own boss.

CB: When you give a clinic to a group of people who have
 never seen or heard of you, what sort of presentation do you
 usually give?

GM: I usually talk about some of the things we have just
 talked about, the importance of feeling your body and I demon-
 strate certain ways of playing, for instance, with the sticks. The
 stroke in which you allow the rebound to give you energy back.
 I'm not the only one working with this stroke, but there aren't
 many who really explore it. You pay attention to the looseness
 in your shoulders, elbows, wrists, and fingers and you utilize
 this flexibility so that the rebound on the stick can actually give
 you energy back. I try to turn people on to that. I also show
 them some odd time signatures and how easy they are to play.
 It's also very important that I give them something to clap out
 so that they are actively involved. I also demonstrate one of the
 more complex time signatures in a solo on the drumset. Some-
 times I have other players with me, a pianist and a bass player
 and we will work on different styles. I'll play choruses, explain
 drum solos, how I hear choruses, things that are obvious. Often
 I have things written out, maybe the rhythm they have clapped
 or a few ideas about the basic stroke, which they can take
 home. If they don't understand it they can look at it. In addition
 to the larger clinic I give a smaller one which is more hand
 picked.

CB: By smaller do you mean 5 or 6 people?

GM: It would be 12 or 13. It's like a master's class in which

continued on page 86

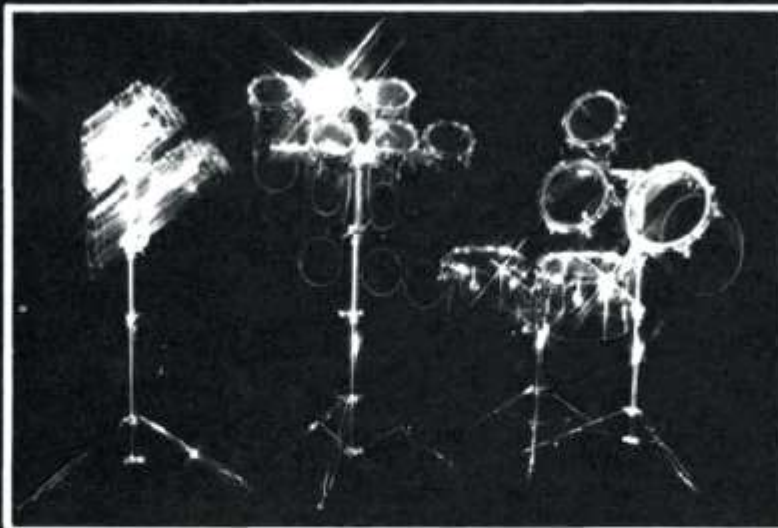
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Marsh: *continued from page 85*

we delve into one of the subjects more deeply. It's not as general and I demand much more.

CB: What do you hope drummers get from your clinics?

GM: I hope they understand the fact that it's possible to play easier. I know they get this, I get feedback all the time.

CB: Do you see any future trends in percussion?

GM: Somehow, I don't know why, I feel there are going to be more original things happening. I think drummers are just going to start playing and inventing their own music. Certain commercial things are going to burn themselves out.

CB: Well, they always do.

GM: So now it gets down to let's get down and play. That's what I feel is going to happen. Maybe in a certain sense, take some of the spirit of free jazz except that it doesn't have to be so angry. Rather it could be, "I don't care what people will say, I'm going to play it." It is the 80's and it's too late, let's just play it man. It might come out as swing, down home swing, I don't know.

CB: At present do you have any goals you'd like to accomplish?

GM: Yes, but it's a multi-faceted thing. I want to go out and give more clinics and meet more people. One of my main goals is to have my own group, but I'm not sure what that is yet. This wasn't so important to me before, but now I would like to have that. Maybe by going out and doing these clinics I'll find out what it is. I would like to take time off from teaching for a year or so and concentrate on practicing and playing. I don't want to leave teaching, I love it, but I realize that it takes a certain amount of time and energy away from being able to sit down and practice. Those things I want to practice on the instrument will have to do with the music that's coming out of the group I will develop. I want to be able to better demonstrate what I'm explaining in the book.

CB: I'd like to ask you one more question. What's so great about being a drummer?

GM: It's a chance to play music. You can feel your whole body. It forces you to stay in tune with your whole body. You can play music with people and also, I find it to be incredibly interesting. I like the fact that the drumset is historically young. It gives me a chance to be an explorer on the instrument. I can sit down almost every day and discover something new. It's a very exciting instrument to play. Put those all together and it ...

CB: Spells love?

GM: Right.

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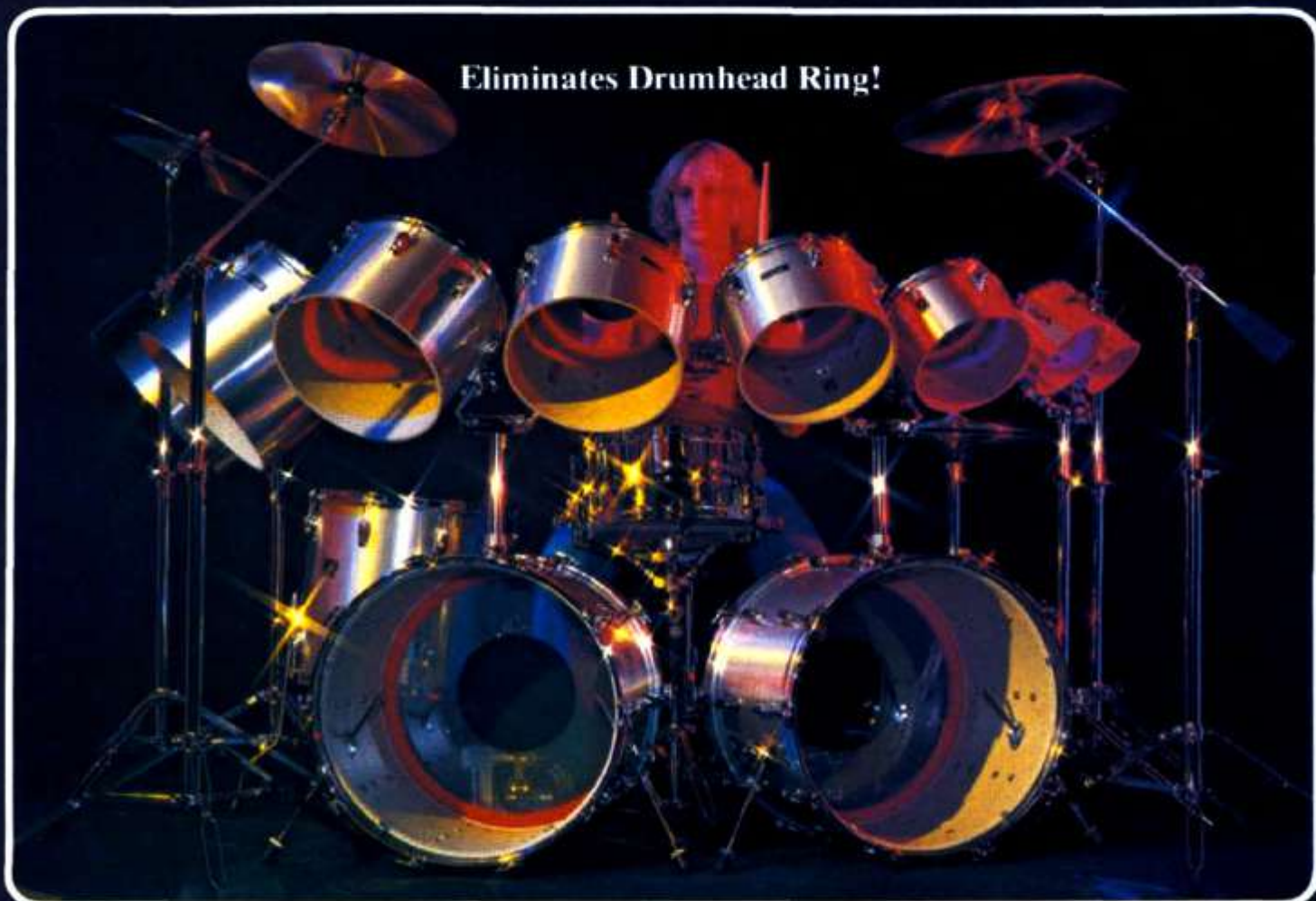
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as nearly as I can fathom, is because the moleskin has too great a damping effect on the vibrations of the thin metal of the shell, consequently it mutes the instrument and renders its voice rather lifeless. But inasmuch as these drums usually have a pleasing sound in their natural state, this incompatibility with moleskin is not a matter over which any sleep need be lost.

Hole in One

Sometimes a wooden drum will seem not so much dull and muffled as choked and congested. In this event, there is a very straightforward way to "open up" the response of the drum—literally, as it turns out. All that is necessary is to drill a second air-vent hole in the shell, 180° removed from the original vent (which is marked by the manufacturer's emblem in all drums of recent vintage). Although I have seen this technique used only on snare drums, I can think of no reason why it shouldn't work as well with other types of drums. But it does seem to be the case that an insufficiently open-sounding response is much more likely to occur in a snare drum than a tom tom or bass drum. In any event, a second air vent repays a small amount of effort with a very marked improvement in the sound quality of the drum in which it has been cut.

Position: The second vent should lie on the same diameter as the initial vent. In other words, place this second hole so that you will be able to look straight through the drum by putting your eye up to either vent once the new vent has been installed. In the vertical dimension, the distance from the nearer edge to the center of the hole should be the same for each vent. If the presence of hardware prevents you from locating the new vent in precisely this spot, put it as close as the hardware allows (and don't worry about the discrepancy between the ideal and the real).

Size: Within reasonable limits, the diameter of the second vent is not very critical. First, measure the diameter of the

existing vent. Second, purchase a grommet (or, if necessary, a package of grommets) from a well-stocked hardware store; the diameter of the *body* of the grommet (not the head) should approximate the diameter of the original vent as closely as possible. After a second vent-hole has been drilled, the grommet will be fastened inside it with quick-drying epoxy, the large head of the grommet positioned against the exterior shell wall, the body extending inwards through the vent towards the interior of the drum. Therefore, the hole for the second vent should be large enough to accommodate the body of the grommet but not so large that it becomes difficult for you to fix the grommet in place with epoxy. (And, of course, if you insist on making the diameter of this vent larger than the head of the grommet, truly all will be lost.) The other cautionary note is that the epoxy should be applied to the grommet and edge of the second vent hole from within the interior of the drum, and pains should be taken to see that the epoxy does not leak from this opening onto the exterior surface of the shell. I trust the reasoning is obvious.

The purpose of the grommet is two-fold: Aesthetically, it ornaments what would otherwise be an unsightly hole in the shell of your drum. Functionally, it serves to keep the wood around the edge of the second vent intact by retarding splintering, rotting, and who knows what else.

And a Delusion

Unlike its predecessors, this measure is pertinent to snare drums exclusively; it is to be invoked when the response of the snares themselves is hollow, "boxy" and lacking in definition, and no amount of fiddling with them will yield the crisp, clean sound for which you're so desperately searching. Granted that the effort to devise verbal equivalents of aural phenomena is always frustratingly inexact, such a drum always makes me think of an empty facial-tissue box that has been outfitted with a snare attachment—that's what I mean by a "boxy" response.

continued on page 94

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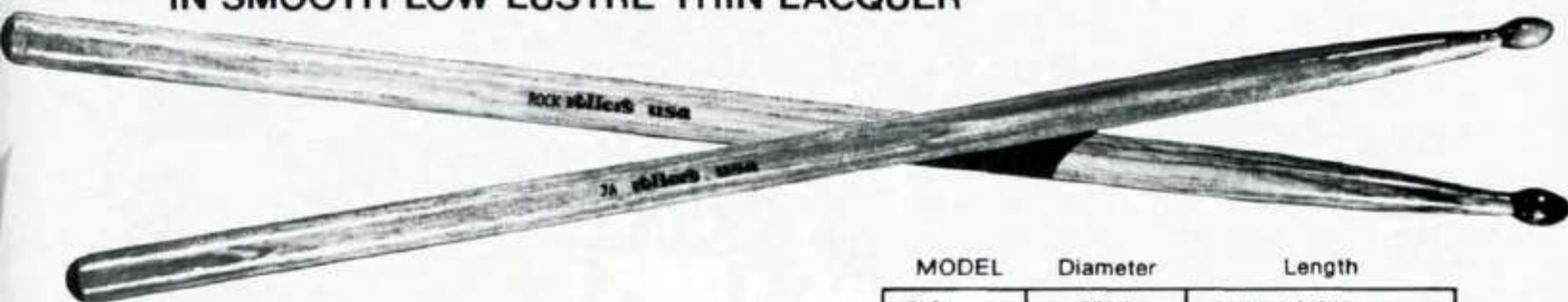
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INDUSTRY HAPPENINGS

YOUNG APPOINTED SLINGERLAND PRESIDENT

William J. Young has been named president of the Slingerland/Deagan organization, it was announced today by Daniel J. Henkin, chairman of the board.

"Bill Young has excellent credentials for his new position. His background in music education, retailing, wholesaling, and manufacturing make him aware of what the educator, the dealer, and the player need in the way of product and support services. I expect that Slingerland and Deagan products will continue to have increasing sales under Bill's guidance," said Henkin, who recently acquired C.G. Conn Ltd. and its related companies, of which Slingerland and Deagan are a part.

Young started his career in music as a band director in 1960, having just graduated from DePaul University. Four years later he left music education, and for the next several years acquired experience in both retail and wholesale. Young joined C.M.I. in 1971 as a district sales manager,



was promoted to regional sales manager within a few years, and then advanced to national sales manager. While at C.M.I. he continued his studies, and in 1977 received his master's degree in business from the University of Chicago.

In 1978, Young was appointed vice president of sales and marketing for the C.G. Conn Company.

STUDENT WINS MODERN DRUMMER SCHOLARSHIP

John Bisquier, a percussion student from Rockville Center, New York, was the winner of *Modern Drummer's* full scholarship to attend the International Percussion Symposium held during the second week in July at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville. The symposium, which is an

annual event sponsored by the Ludwig Industries, was a week long series of classes taught by outstanding artists covering all areas of percussion.

John, who is 18 and plans to major in music when he graduates from high school, chose the drum set track of instruction and had classes with Ed Shaughnessy, Carmine Appice, Al Dawson, Marvin Dahlgren, and many other percussion experts.



ROB CARSON JOINS REMO

Rob Carson, a renowned drum corps performer, has been named Educational Director of Remo, Inc.

The appointment was announced by Remo Belli, president of Remo, who said Carson will be active in various aspects of product research and development, sales and promotion, with emphasis on drum corps and marching percussion activities.

In his announcement Belli said, "Rob Carson is recognized as one of the finest rudimental performers and technicians in the drum corps field today. Through his well-disciplined and aesthetic approach to music he has perfected many new and enlightening rudimental techniques."

The new Remo spokesman's expertise is in the field of drum corps percussion, where he was a member of the famed Santa Clara Drum and Bugle Corps percussion section from 1970 to 1976. He graduated to drum instructor of the section in 1976 and served in that capacity until this year. Most recently Carson has been active in marching percussion clinic presentations for Remo, Inc. and Slingerland Drum Company.

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LP APPOINTS NATIONAL SALES COORDINATOR

Latin Percussion, Inc. has announced the appointment of Shelly Davidoff as National Sales Coordinator in charge of domestic sales and marketing.

Davidoff has served in a sales capacity with LP for the past two years covering the New York-Metropolitan area, Long Island and Florida.

In his new position, Davidoff will be responsible for coordinating a national sales effort for LP with an accent on personal contact. He will also

direct an expanded LP sales force that will endeavor to provide a service to dealers that is consistent with the quality of the LP product line.



DRUM APPRAISAL SERVICE BEING OFFERED

MD Advisory Board Member, Charlie Donnelly has announced that he is now offering a drum appraisal service. The service will be limited to vintage drums, with a special emphasis on rare, hard to find items.

Donnelly is considered an expert in this field, and his knowledge will enable owners of vintage percussion equipment to place a more accurate valuation on their possessions.

All pertinent information, including rates can be obtained by contacting Mr. Donnelly c/o: Charlie Donnelly's Drum Centre, 7 East Cedar St., Newington, CT 06111. Telephone: (203) 667-0535.

PRO MARK BEGINS CONSTRUCTION OF NEW FACILITY

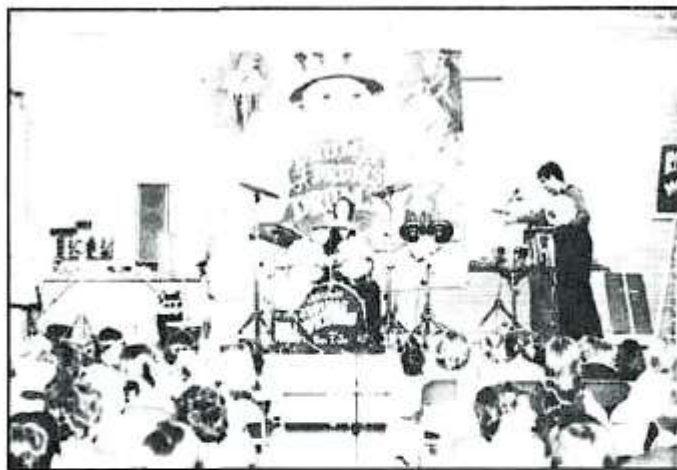
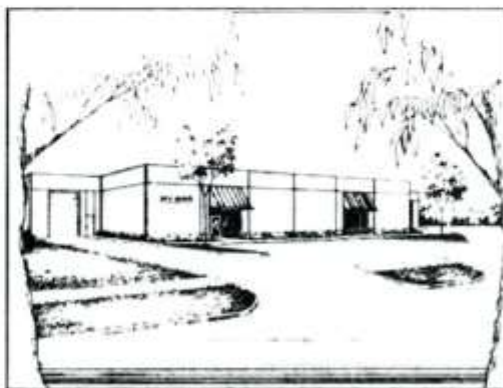
The Pro-Mark Corporation, one of the world's largest producers and distributors of drumsticks for the music industry has begun construction of a new manufacturing facility in Houston.

The 22,000 sq ft. manufacturing, warehouse, and office complex will be located in the 10700 block of Craighead Drive at Willowbend in Southwest Houston. Ninety (90%) percent of the building will be used exclusively for the manufacturing and warehousing of the drumstick products. The building is designed with the capability of being expanded into a multi-story facility.

Pro-Mark began operations in 1959, utilizing the drumstick manufacturing capabilities of a number of factories in Japan. According to Herb Brochstein, president, the world-wide demand for quality drumsticks has necessitated the company's expan-

sion in the United States. Pro-Mark and its parent company, Remo, Inc. of California, presently distribute and sell their products in more than 70 countries throughout the world. With the addition of its Houston manufacturing facility, Pro-Mark projects its production and sales to be in excess of 2 million pairs of drumsticks annually.

The company's new Houston operation is expected to begin production in early 1981. It will continue to operate its present factories in Japan and Taiwan.



DRUMS, DRUMS, DRUMS

Recently, grammar school students at School #4 in Clifton, New Jersey were treated to an hour long program called Drums, Drums, Drums, presented by music educators and performers Russ Moy and Joseph Caroselli, with the assistance of sound effects coordinator Jack Earles.

The presentation gave students a chance to understand the origin and historical significance of drums as a means of communication.

Moy and Caroselli demonstrated the use of various percussion instruments including the African rope drum, congas, timbales and talking drum. Behind the drumset, Moy illustrated the different contemporary drum beats from disco, to rock 'n' roll and jazz, plus the different rhythmic styles of the polka, tarantella, can can and samba.

Moy and Caroselli are presenting their program to school students throughout New York, New Jersey and Connecticut.

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Shop Talk: continued from page 90

The malfunction here—one to which Gretsch wooden snare drums are particularly prone—is the result of snare beds that have been cut too deeply into the bottom edge of the shell. This makes it impossible to tension the snare head properly, and the always-too-loose snare head, in turn, leads to a blurred, sloppy and uncrisp snare response.

The solution is to render the snare beds shallower—conceptually simple, physically not difficult, but tedious in the execution. All that is required is the same board and sandpaper arrangement described and illustrated in the first article in this series in the discussion of how to true the bearing edges of a drum (this discussion should be consulted before proceeding). The steps are:

1. Staple fresh coarse (80 grade) and fine (180 grade) sandpaper to the opposite sides of a piece of high-grade veneer plywood, the flatter the better. The width of the board should be at least a few inches greater than the diameter of your drum (hence a board 16" wide should do for all but a very small number of snare drums).

2. After removing the bottom rim, the head and the snares, measure and write down the approximate depth of the snare beds at their center (how you measure isn't crucial, so long as you measure in the same place every time).

3. Place the snare edge of the shell on the side of the board with the coarse sandpaper and begin rotating the former on the latter. Continue rotating the shell. Now rotate it some more. After what seems like an eternity has passed, again measure the depth of the snare beds at their center. If the beds have shrunk to about half of their former depth, the worst is over. If not, it's back to the grindstone—or in this instance, the sandpaper.

4. When the snare beds are finally half of their original depth, turn the board over and rotate the shell on the fine sandpaper until the edge feels perfectly smooth to the touch.

5. Using first the coarse and then the fine sandpaper, recut the bevel on the bearing edge of the drum (see the instructions in the aforementioned article for additional details).

6. Apply a thin coat of paraffin to the bearing edge, using a plumber's candle or some other source.

7. Replace the snare head, rim and snares. Play the drum for a week. If the snare response is acceptable, offer a small prayer of thanks to the deity of your choice. If the drum's box-like characteristics are still in evidence, repeat steps 1 through 7, inclusive, until you obtain the snare sound you're after.

And that is all there is to it. As I said, it's not a particularly complex operation—but not a notably stimulating one, either. Still, if you are now overjoyed with a snare drum that brought you only grief before, didn't the end justify the means? For what more could you ask than that?

P.S. In the interval between writing and publication, Eugene Okamoto, whom I described in Part I of this series as "a first-rate drum repairman . . . who loves drums and knows them literally inside and out," has moved to Drum World, 994 Geneva Ave., San Francisco. So far as I am concerned, this fact establishes Drum World as the Bay area store to visit if you are a percussionist in any way concerned about the maintenance, renovation and repair of your drums.

F. K.



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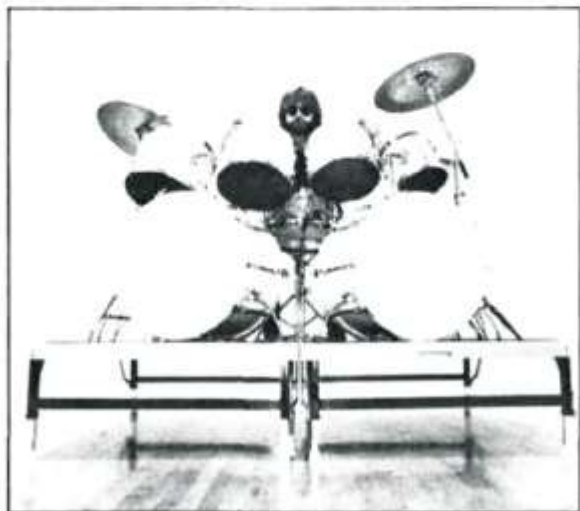
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Pro-Line Products, Inc. announces the introduction of its Pro-Line Riser, designed specifically for the musician and the touring theatrical industry. Pro-Line Risers may be used for a variety of purposes, from a single low height drum or keyboard riser all the way

up to a full size 4' stage, complete with rails, stairs, and skirt. Single or multiple units can be connected side to side or end to end. A full accessory line is also available, including a screw in foot for fine adjustments in between the standard 1" height adjustments, longer inner legs, lockable wheels, a drummer tie down kit, and a dolly.

The Pro-Line riser is built with exterior grade plywood, structural aluminum channels and steel legs. The standard size platform is 6' x 7', or two 3 1/2' x 6' half sections, although a variety of other sizes can be purchased. Each unit is height adjustable from 14" to 2 1/2' using various inner legs. The entire leg structure can also be changed allowing the same riser to expand upward from 2 1/2' to 4' with 2" adjustments the whole way. The deck surface is a nylon, rot free carpet, and a hardwood finish is also available for all sizes and models.

For further information, contact: Pro-Line Products, Inc., P.O. Box 7788, Ann Arbor, MI 48107. (313) 663-9297.



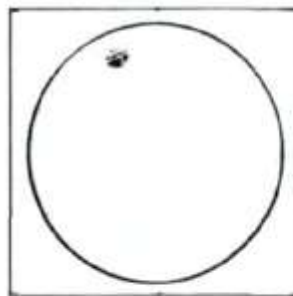
NEW REMO FIBERSKYN 2 SYNTHETIC DRUM HEADS

Development of a new line of synthetic drum heads called *FiberSkyn 2* that delivers a deeper, more mellow and more "natural" sound than previously available in plastic heads has been announced by Remo, Inc.

FiberSkyn 2 heads utilize an entirely new material that resembles the appearance, "feel" and sound of natural calfskin.

The new drum heads are available in medium and thin weights in a complete range of sizes from 6" to 40" diameters. The original *FiberSkyn* heads are no longer being manufactured by Remo.

Complete information on *FiberSkyn 2* drum heads is available from Remo dealers or from Remo, Inc., 12804 Raymer Street, North Hollywood, CA 91605.



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THE ELECTRO-HARMONIX DRUM SEQUENCER

Electro-Harmonix is happy to announce the introduction of the *Drum Sequencer*, a completely new concept in electronic percussion. The sequencer's eight tones, linked in time by digital circuitry and triggered by impact or automatically, produce everything from short, single phrases to continuous recirculating patterns. The flexibility of control over pitch, rate of sequence, and envelope, allows for a broad range of musical and pure sound effects. Disco bass lines. Pinball machines. Laughter. Emanations from the Twilight Zone. "Frippertronic" without a single tape loop!

Each of the eight tones is adjustable over a seven octave range. Pitch, rate, and envelope are controlled by sliders. Clock/Pad and Repeat/Single switches yield four distinctly different types of effect. For a natural feel, the striking pad is made of genuine leather. AC powered, the *Drum Sequencer* comes with the hardware for mounting to Roto-Tom or cymbal stands.

For further information, contact: Electro-Harmonix, 27 West 23rd Street, New York, NY 10010. (212) 741-1770.



HIPERCUSSION OFFERS LATIN INSTRUMENTS

Hipercussion, a division of Caldironi Musica, is now offering a line of congas, bongos and timbales.

The congas and bongos feature fiberglass shells and steel stiffened rims. The congas also have adjustable legs. The timbales feature steel shells and wooden interior surfaces.

According to a company spokesman, Cuban and Latin American percussionists George Aghedo, Louis Agudo, Rene Mantegna and Roby Haliffi were consulted on the production of these instruments.

For more information, contact: Caldironi Musica, Hipercussion Division, Via Perugino 44, 20093 Cologno Monzese, Milano, Italy.



LP GENERATION II PROFESSIONAL BONGO

Latin Percussion has introduced its latest style professional bongo referred to as *Generation II*. The new style retains the same head sizes as have been used for close to 15 years but the shells are more tapered.

As with the original model, *Generation II* is available with the superstrong castings originated by LP as well as the steel design preferred by some traditional Latin players. The shells are constructed of mahogany.

For further information, contact: Latin Percussion, Inc., 160 Belmont Avenue, Garfield, NJ 07026. (201) 478-6903.

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